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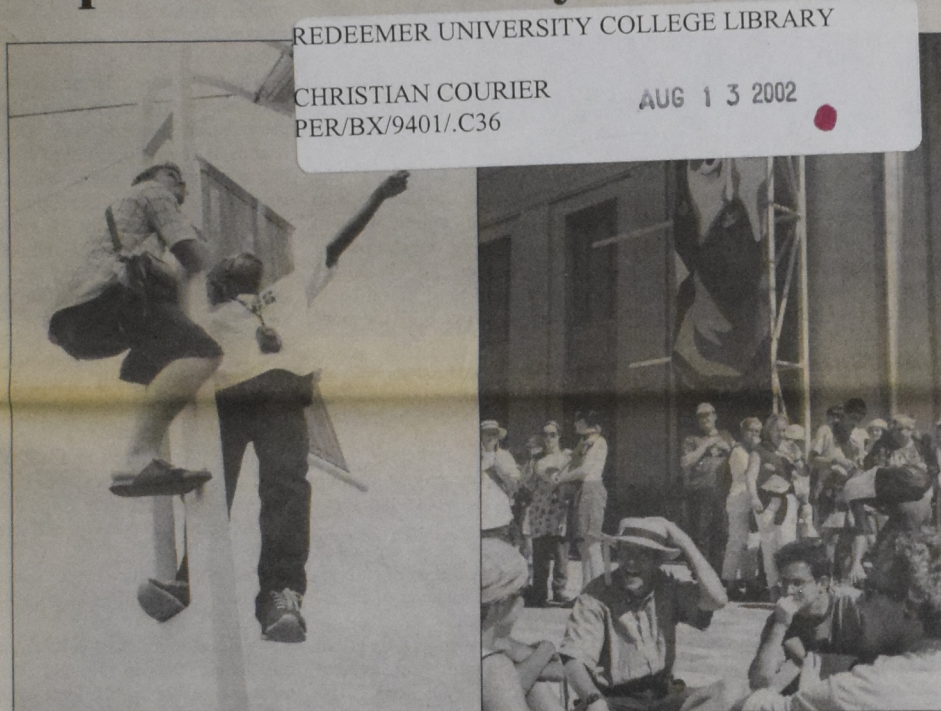


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57th year of publication

Pope connects with youth, inspires Catholics, Protestants



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SUE CARELESS PHOTOS

Enthusiastic young Catholics from many countries gather to hear and see the Pope in Toronto.

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO – Pope John Paul II's recent visit to Toronto brought some surprises, such as the overwhelmingly positive coverage in the mainstream media, and the Pope's high level of energy, despite his numerous ailments. Although obviously a Catholic event, the Pope's visit for World Youth Day also has significance for Protestants, says a theology professor who has met the Pope several times.

In December 1997, George Vandervelde, a senior member of Toronto's Institute for Christian Studies, had dinner with the Pope (and a few others) in his Vatican apartment, and spoke with him in English. Vandervelde has special expertise in Roman Catholic and ecumenical theology, and was attending the Synod of Rome that year as a Protestant fraternal delegate, representing the Canadian

Council of Churches. He wrote about that experience in the Jan. 23 and 30, 1998, issues of *Christian Courier*. Vandervelde also met the Pope in 2000.

Rock star atmosphere

Vandervelde described this year's World Youth Day (WYD) as having "almost a rock star atmosphere" as young Catholics from around the world gathered in Toronto to catch a glimpse of the Pope. The youth were looking for "encouragement from a figure who means a great deal to people," said Vandervelde.

The mass coverage of the papal visit in the mainstream media impressed Vandervelde. "I've never seen the name of Jesus so often in the press" – in a positive context, he observed. "Here we have the name of Christ central in the media."

Despite the attention given to

the Pope himself, the Pope has used his visit as an opportunity "to point clearly to Jesus Christ," asserted Vandervelde.

Many observers have commented on the mysterious connection the Pope seems to have with young people, despite his age and poor health. "This Pope's had a very strong bond with young people" since early on in his papacy, said Vandervelde. He noted that despite the Pope's poor health, "I haven't seen him look so good" before.

Earlier in John Paul's career, when he was a priest in Poland, he made a point of befriending younger people, explained Vandervelde. "He married them, and baptized their children, and went on mountain hikes with these people."

The Pope is "the originator of these Youth Days," said Vandervelde. These days are important

because the Roman Catholic Church realizes "if you don't capture the attention of young people, you don't have a future as a church."

Pope has certain charisma

WYD events encourage young Catholics to become more active church members, suggested Vandervelde. Some of the young people who have attended these events have spoken to the media about how they have been encour-

aged and energized by attending.

The Pope also has a certain charisma that attracts young people, observed Vandervelde. He has a "deep piety," and presents a clear evangelical witness.

The Pope's visit also has some significance for Protestants, he suggested. "When you hear someone speak about Jesus Christ [as the Pope has done], the disunity falls away.... What matters is people testify to and follow Christ."

See POPE page 2...

Women in ministry among topics discussed by Reformed, Presbyterian church leaders

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. – While summer is the time for holidays for many Christian families, it is also the season for annual synods or assemblies for several major Reformed and Presbyterian denominations. Hot topics at these synods included the role of women in ministry, ethical issues related to stem cell research, making connections with other like-minded denominations, and reflecting multiculturalism in church leadership.

Moderator from Palestine

The Presbyterian Church (USA) took a bold step at its late-June General Assembly (held in Columbus, Ohio) by electing a Palestinian American pastor and avowed supporter of non-violence as its new moderator. According to ENI, Rev. Fahed Abu-Akel said he was elected because of his ministry and long record of work in the denomination, but acknowledged that his election may have symbolic importance, as well. "Justice for Palestinians is timely," he said. Speaking on June 15, the same day that another suicide bombing killed at least 19 people in Israel, Abu-Akel said he was praying "for

Israel and the Jewish victims of the bombing, the families of those who died, and for healing between Jews and Palestinians."

Abu-Akel said he was keenly aware of the need to reach out to non-white communities in the U.S. That is one of his goals as moderator. Other priorities, he said, were the denomination's spiritual renewal, a renewed commitment to mission and the cultivation of what he called "unity in diversity."

The Reformed Church in America (RCA) took a similar step by choosing Rev. John Chang as the first Asian American president of its General Synod, held in Orange City, Iowa, in early June.

Like the PCUSA, the RCA also showed a concern for non-violence, which was reflected in a recommendation by its Commission on Christian Action. The commission encouraged RCA congregations and institutions "to teach, practice, and model non-violence" and to include in their ministries "efforts that address structural, institutional violence and economic injustice". It also challenged members to participate in the "Decade to Overcome Violence" of the World Council of Churches by

See DENOMINATIONS p. 2...

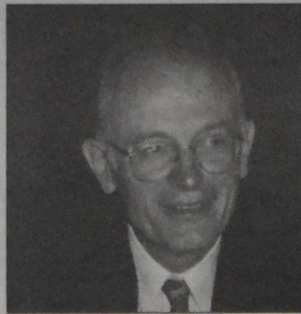
News

Pope gets positive coverage in Canadian media

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When the Pope came to Toronto, "I had expected there would have been much more antipathy" from non-Catholics, but he didn't see that, said Vandervelde.

Protestants can learn "not to be so divided" when they see an event such as Toronto's WYD, asserted Vandervelde. "There's no single [Protestant] body which could pull off what the Catholic Church can do." The closest equivalent to the Pope that Protestants have is Billy Graham, he observed.



George Vandervelde

Surprisingly positive

Mainstream newspapers such as the *National Post* and the *Globe and Mail* were surprisingly positive in their coverage of the Pope's visit. Writing a series of columns for the *Post*, Raymond de Souza encouraged its readers to "sit back and enjoy [WYD]. Or better, get involved and prepare to be surprised."

Trying to explain WYD's popularity with Catholic young people, he wrote: "It is a phenom-

enon that does not fit into the usual categories. Writers searching for comparisons often call it a 'Catholic Woodstock.' That doesn't quite do it. Woodstock was a local celebration of a certain aspect of popular culture and free love. World Youth Day is truly international and multicultural — it is led by a Polish priest, one must not forget — and is all about inviting young people to a love that is costly, that makes demands, the kind of love that is nailed to a cross.

The whole business, to put it mildly, runs counter to the conventional wisdom about young people and religion."

Also in the *Post*, George Weigel wrote that the Pope is: "a magnet for the young at a moment in history when it is widely assumed that young people have little interest in religious faith or 'traditional' morality."

"When a vigorous, athletic John Paul II traded jokes and cheers with 20,000 boisterous teenagers in New York's Madison Square Garden in 1979, there was undoubtedly something of 'John Paul Superstar' (as a *Time* magazine cover story put it) about the whole business. But that cannot explain his magnetism today. A variant of Parkinson's disease, a mishandled hip-replacement operation, cancer surgery, more than two decades of 16-hour work days and the lingering effects of the 1981 assassination attempt have left unmistakable marks. John Paul II is no longer a physically compelling figure, and hasn't been for years.

"And still the young flock to him: two million of them at the last World Youth Day in Rome, in August 2000 — the largest pilgrimage in European history. Why? There are two reasons, I think, and both tell us something important about the man who is Pope.

"Young people have extremely acute hypocrisy-detectors. In John Paul II, young people see a man who is integrity all the way through — a man who is, manifestly, spending out his life in service to the truths on which he has staked his life. That's a very compelling witness in an age of plastic politicians, artificially created pop stars, and media spin. Integrity, it turns out, is a dynamic, magnetic force in human affairs. It changes lives. And those lives change history.

"I am also convinced that young people are attracted to John Paul II because, unlike Western popular culture, he doesn't pander to them. Rather, he challenges them to lead lives of moral heroism. That challenge is all the more

compelling because he backs it up with the witness of his own life."

Is the Pope cool?

Is the Pope cool? The *Post*'s Jeremy Lott argued that he is, because "being cool is about being utterly comfortable in one's own skin, about knowing what one is about... it's about authenticity."

Meanwhile, the *Globe and Mail* featured front page stories and full color photos of the Pope, along with other significant coverage. The July 26 issue even reported details of the Pope's main message, a homily presented in English and French focusing on Jesus' Beatitudes.

The Pope helped define his connection with young people in that presentation when he said, "Dear friends, the aged Pope, full of years but still young at heart, answers your youthful desire for happiness with words that are not his own. They are words that rang out 2,000 years ago.... The key word in Jesus' teaching is a proclamation of joy: 'Blessed are they...'"

Denominations cut or build links to CRC

... continued from page 1

sharing their ideas and experiences.

The RCA also discussed making links with the Christian Reformed Church (CRC). Church leaders called on the RCA to look for ways to move toward greater unity with the CRC in North America. The two denominations split in 1857. Synod's action could make it simpler to exchange ministers.

Meanwhile, the Presbyterian Church in America's newly-elected moderator — Rev. Joseph Ryan — also spoke about church unity. In accepting the position of moderator, Ryan said, "The world is watching our common union — a family in the Lord Jesus. Let me urge us to express this common union by the way we talk to one another, and in this way to express that we are brothers." The 300,000-member denomination came into being in the 1970s as a protest against the increasing liberalization of the UPCUSA. As a member of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC), the PCA initiated the action to drop the CRC from NAPARC membership for admitting women to the office of elder.

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), also a member of NAPARC, discussed building closer connections to other churches. At its General Assembly

held in Wenham, Mass. in mid-June, OPC delegates reported that they "continue to draw closer to the Bible Presbyterian Church" with the ultimate goal of formal union. Recently, this small denomination, which broke away from the OPC in 1937 under the leadership of Carl McIntyre, confessed that they erred in doing so. The OPC also recently recommended to NAPARC that the CRC be removed from that fellowship. The assembly prayed for the CRC that it would "repent of unbiblical practices that led to this action" (that is, authorizing the ordination of women to the offices of minister and ruling elder in that denomination).

Women in leadership

The role of women in church leadership was debated by both the RCA and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA). The latter denomination, which has a membership just more than 6,000, met in Kansas City July 6. While the RCA debated the full admission of women to all offices of the church, the RPCNA synod debated an appeal to discontinue the practice of ordaining women as deacons.

The RPCNA ordains both men and women as deacons. This is not a recent development; the practice actually goes back a century in the RPCNA. The church has been debating what exactly deaconesses

can do, whether they are ordained in the same sense that men are ordained as elders, and what sort of authority they have.

Some delegates favored the formation of a third office — an unordained order of deaconess. However, after hours of debate, the recommendation "that Synod sustain the statements in our standards as they now appear, not restricting the office of deacon to men as proposed" was easily passed.

Meanwhile, the RCA discussed the full ordination of women. In its early days of the ordination of women as ministers, the General Synod inserted a conscience clause in the Book of Church Order, "to exempt people who object to women as ministers of Word and sacrament from participating in decisions or actions contrary to their understanding of the scriptural role of women in ministry."

The Commission on Church Order recommended the deletion of the clauses, suggesting that, although the clauses do not allow anyone to obstruct the election, ordination, and installation of women ministers, their mere existence "contributes to the unintended perception that women in office are somehow lesser." The report noted that "removing the clauses changes nothing in the ordination practice."

Many delegates thought the deletion premature. "We need the

clauses," said professor Jim Brownson. "They protect women from those who would bar them from ministry."

"The clauses have created a way to stay together in our diversity," said Jack Ritsema of Pleasant Prairie Classis.

"Women are wonderfully gifted and truly called," said general synod professor Paul Fries. "The conscience clauses are institutionalized resistance to the Holy Spirit."

After impassioned but respectful debate, synod delegates bowed their heads for a moment of prayer, then voted to delete the conscience clauses from the RCA's Book of Church Order.

Stem cell research

The RCA also examined the thorny ethical issue of embryonic stem cell research. The denomination's Commission on Christian Action has studied and written about this issue over the past few years, and has presented a paper called "The Creation and Use of Embryonic Stem Cells." According to the commission, "Such a paper is timely in light of the recent public debate over the use of stem cells and the recent decision by U.S. President George W. Bush to allow government funding for limited research using human embryonic stem cells." The paper explores ethical questions sur-

rounding the creation and use of stem cells, and discusses some biblical principles that may guide decisions about the creation and use of stem cells.

The commission made some proposals about this issue including these:

- developing stem cells from miscarried fetuses seemed the most acceptable or "the least ethically ambiguous" to the Commission, if done with parental consent.

- continuing to use the existing stem cell lines for research was generally supported by the commission.

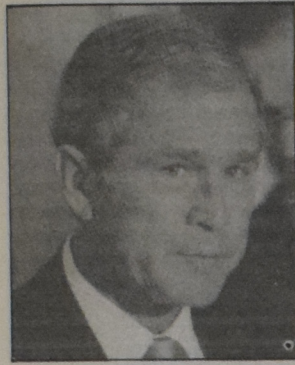
- developing stem cells from surplus frozen embryos or embryos facing disposal left the Commission divided. "Parental consent," advised the Commission, "potentially helps to address concerns about embryos becoming a commodity, managed by scientists and owned for monetary profit."

- producing embryos for the explicit purpose of obtaining more stem cells was rejected by the Commission: "Creating embryos solely for scientific purposes, such as cloning and developing stem cells, seems an especially hasty and ill-advised step toward a perspective that views embryos and potentially all life as a commodity or resource."

The RCA will be making this report available to its congregations for study and discussion.

News/Politics

President Bush addresses Southern Baptists



President George W. Bush



Bill Bright

Alan Doerksen

ST LOUIS, Mo. — President George W. Bush and Campus Crusade founder Bill Bright were keynote speakers at the annual convention of the Southern Baptists — the largest Protestant denomination in the U.S. — held in mid-June in St. Louis, Mo. Human cloning was a hot topic at the convention, as it was with the Reformed Church in America at its annual synod.

President Bush addressed the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) annual meeting in St. Louis, Mo. June 11, speaking via satellite from Washington, D.C., reported the Evangelical Press.

Bush recalled the influence Baptists have had throughout America's history, noting that they were "among the earliest champions of religious tolerance and freedom. Baptists have long upheld the ideal of a free church in a free state."

The president acknowledged the nearly 16 million members of today's SBC, noting that Baptists have helped to guard the separation of church and state, while seeking to maintain the vital interest of religious faith in the political process. "Baptists believe as America's founders did, that religious faith is the moral anchor of American life," Bush said.

Addressing the present fight in Congress over the issue of cloning for medical research, he said, "We believe that a life is a creation, not a commodity, and that our children are gifts to be loved and protected, not products to be designed and manufactured by human cloning."

Baptists criticize cloning

Human cloning is "one of the most critical issues we face," Richard Land warned the convention. Land is president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. He noted that in January 2001, scientists announced the creation of the first genetically

modified monkey — "an advancement that could lead to customized primates for medical research.... It brings the possibility of genetic manipulation closer than ever to humans," Land observed, noting also that a watchdog group revealed last year that a European company had granted a patent to Australian scientists for the creation of human-animal hybrids. The patent, he said, involves the creation of embryos with cells from humans and mice, pigs and goats.

"Whether man is going to continue to be as God created him to be or we are going to allow man to play God and manipulate human genetic structure and clone human beings for their own profit is what is at stake," Land said, as reported by Baptist Press.

Clones and slaves

Reckoning back to the slave issue in America, and that today some regard clones as something less than human, Land recalled there was a time when the Supreme Court said slaves weren't human. Both are wrongheaded beliefs, he continued.

Unless Christians intervene, Land said he envisioned a time when clone plantations with clone slaves for sale to highest bidder will be used by other human beings. God's judgment will fall on a civilization that allows such an abomination, he warned.

Land encouraged convention messengers to contact their U.S. senators to urge them to support the Brownback-Landrieu bill's outright ban on human cloning for therapeutic or reproductive purposes. "The legislation will provide a firewall against the cloning of human beings," he explained.

An alternative bill, also offered in the Senate, would allow for human cloning but would prescribe for the embryo to be killed before reaching a certain age of gestation. "Your federal government would

require the killing of human beings before they can become recognizably human," Land said. "If that happens, God help us."

Pray for revival

During the closing session of the convention, Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, spoke about the sad state of America's churches, which he described as "one of the great scandals of the centuries."

"The fires burn brightly in other parts of the world and in some parts of America, but, oh, we need to pray for revival and believe in God for revival and begin in our own hearts," declared Bright, as reported by Baptist Press.

That revival will only come,

however, when Christians surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ, confess the sins that hinder God's spirit and live every moment in the power of the Holy Spirit, he said.

"All kinds of problems plague us daily, but if we truly understand [who Jesus is], we are not hindered by circumstances. God often uses circumstances like illness and loss of loved ones, [or] financial reverses for our blessing. And if we know how to say thank you in all things, and we learn how to praise him during trials and tribulations, ... God blesses that expression of faith."

Bright knows firsthand about illness and trials. Doctors only gave him a year to live in 2000 when he was diagnosed with

pulmonary fibrosis, an incurable ailment afflicting the lungs. He wore an oxygen tube while speaking to the SBC assembly and had to stop several times with coughing spasms.

"But I am standing before you by the grace of God. I am praising him, though I am ready at any moment to go.... I can tell you that the last year of my life has been the most fruitful, productive and most joyful year of my life," said Bright, author of more than 100 books.

"I am on this oxygen 24 hours a day," he said, "but circumstances do not contribute to misery. It's our lack of understanding of who God is and his wonderful, holy purpose for us that frustrates so many."

Uncomfortable with pledge of allegiance



Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

In 1892 the Rev. Francis Bellamy, a Baptist minister in Boston with socialist sympathies, composed a pledge of allegiance for American school children, in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the Americas. In its original form it went as follows: "I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." In the generation following the Civil War the word "indivisible" was clearly intended to exclude anyone with residual sympathies for the lost cause of the southern Confederacy.

From battle cry to status quo

By the time I was in a public elementary school near Chicago 70 years later, the pledge had been enlarged several times and had become, not a battle cry for union and equality, but a staid representative of the status quo, suffused with a kind of civil religiosity: "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." The salute which had accompanied the original pledge had, by the 1940s, come to seem too reminiscent of similar salutes in Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. Thus as a child I was expected simply to place my right hand over my heart as a visible patriotic gesture.

In June, the Ninth Circuit Court in San Francisco declared the recitation of the full pledge unconstitutional due to the presence of the phrase "under God." Many Americans are up in arms over this decision — some because of the exclusion of God from public life and others because the court has made an overtly political decision better left to the elected legislatures.

Something faintly idolatrous

I myself have long been uncomfortable with the idea of a pledge of allegiance to a flag. Yes, I recited it, along with my other classmates some four decades ago. But by the time I was around 20 or so, I began to think that, for the believing Christian,

there was something faintly idolatrous about this quasi-liturgical, quasi-creedal recitation to a piece of cloth.

Many American Christians would not share my view. In a large independent evangelical congregation near Chicago, the Sunday closest to Independence Day is designated "God and Country Sunday." Its worship service consists entirely of national hymns, such as "America the Beautiful," along with a litany in the course of which the congregation is expected to repeat the pledge several times. Members of the congregation are evidently not as offended as I would be by such an experience.

Canadians can be forgiven for viewing the current controversy over the pledge with detached bemusement, since we have nothing similar in this country. However, virtually every country, including Canada, has an *oath* of allegiance. I took this oath when I became a citizen in November of 1994. I have not recited it since.

Consider an alternative to pledge

Indeed, there is a legitimate place for oaths of allegiance. When newcomers attain citizenship in their adopted country, they properly swear allegiance to their new political community — whether this be directed to an hereditary head of state and her heirs, as in Canada, or to the constitution, as in the United States. Similarly when public officeholders accept their new positions of responsibility, they take an oath to bear allegiance to the body politic they now undertake to serve.

But the daily recitation of a pledge of allegiance is too redolent of the totalitarian state. Better to set aside the pledge altogether and foster a more limited, scaled-back form of patriotism among the young.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario.

Editorial

Corporate corruption and the corrosion of character

Harry der Nederlanden

Enron, WorldCom, Adelphia, Global Crossing — these have become familiar names to anyone who watches the evening news. These and a number of others were prosperous corporations about a year ago, touted as a sound investment by most financial advisors. Over the last few months, the value of their stock has plummeted as investigators learned that these companies have been grossly misrepresenting their earnings to investors. By manipulating their books — with the collusion of major auditing firms — they concealed huge losses and kept attracting investors by issuing unrealistic reports about how the company was doing.

The bubble was bound to burst

Of course, the value of numerous high-tech stocks and the so-called dot.com companies exploiting the potential of the Internet was hardly realistic either. Article after article spoke of their skyrocketing prices as a “bubble” that was bound to burst sooner or later. But investors kept pouring their savings into companies purely on the faith that the bubble would keep expanding. A lot of the wealth “earned” by investors over this period was illusory. However, while the value of many of the hi-tech stocks was based on little more than faith, hope and avarice, the value of Enron and WorldCom was based on accounting wizardry. Both, however, relied on the illusion that anyone with a little cash and the

guts to risk it in the stock market could get rich in a very short time.

After all, the business pages were filled with the stories of young men who had risked all in the new world of business related to the computer and the Internet and who had become millionaires in 10 years or less. Young people were coming out of business school and computer programming courses with the dream — the expectation, really — that they could be millionaires by the time they reached 40.

After the first revelations of corporate wrong-doing, commentators on the financial pages of papers like *The New York Times* and the *Globe and Mail* insisted that the shenanigans pulled by the executives of Enron were not typical. George Bush hastened to assure Americans and investors abroad that U.S. corporations were not corrupt. American businessmen are by and large honest fellows who have produced genuine wealth by their expertise, their entrepreneurial virtues and their ability to exploit the strengths of the free enterprise system.

Corruption more widespread, deliberate

It turns out, however, that not only is the corruption more widespread than first appeared, according to recent accounts it is also much more perfidious. As the story is told, quite a number of CEOs were not just cooking the books in order to keep their companies solvent and viable, they were actually manipulating things so as to make the stock prices of the company rise in the short term so they could make huge profits on the stock options they got as part of their salaries. They did so even though it would harm the company in the long run. One of the TV news specials covering the corporate scandals was titled, “Take the money and run.” CEOs, already being paid millions per year, so engineered things that while investors lost their savings and employees their jobs and pensions, they rode off into the golden sunset to their million-dollar mansions in their Jaguars and Mercedes with many more millions of dollars in their pockets.

Now the public and the politicians are asking, “How can this have happened?” Like President Bush, many are genuinely shocked; they feel betrayed and they are demanding prison terms for these corporate leaders who have badly hurt tens of thousands of middle-class folk and who have done untold damage to the institutions on which our free enterprise system depend.

But do we have a right to be shocked or even surprised at this corruption? Hasn't it been a long time in the making? And haven't a great many of us honest, hard-working middle-class folk conspired in creating this semblance of prosperity?

Charles Colson, a wise, reliable guide, tells us more rules and laws are not the answer. The roots of this corruption, he says, lies in our abandonment of moral absolutes and our embrace of relativism. An entire generation has been taught that there are no eternal standards, so now we have at the helm of our business world people who lack a conscience, a moral sense.

I'm sure this is a factor. However, many of the executives in these corporations are hardly the products of nihilistic philosophy. Mr. Ebberts of WorldCom may be more typical. He is a moral, church-going man who teaches Sunday school in his Baptist church. Recently he stood up before his congregation to say that he is not a swindler or a thief but an honest man doing his best. Before the house investigating committee, however, he remained mute.

The question to ask, it seems to me, is: How are honest but ambitious men drawn into such shady kinds of behavior?

Remember the mid-'80s and the early '90s when the business pages were all a-buzz with news of the latest mergers, acquisitions and hostile takeovers? A new business persona appeared on the scene — the corporate raider. He appeared on the cover of *Time* and *Newsweek* as the efficiency expert who descended ruthlessly on fat, complacent companies to make them lean and mean, for that was the only way they could remain competitive. Even such huge, conservative companies as IBM and AT&T underwent traumatic shake-ups. Management and workers alike trembled at the coming of the man with the hatchet, for it meant no one's job was safe at any level. Parts of the company got sold off and redundant management laid off. Operations were merged or streamlined and thousands of employees — white collar as well as blue collar — lost their jobs.

This didn't just happen to struggling, unprofitable companies. On the contrary, it happened just as often to solid, profitable ones. Although it wreaked havoc in the corporate culture, pushing levels of anxiety, uncertainty and outright fear to unprecedented levels, investors loved it. The downsized or merged firms quickly showed a better bottom line, and the price of the stock shot up on Wall Street. The news that one of these shake-up artists had descended on a company was enough to bring investors running.

It turns out that over the long haul only one in four of such radically re-engineered companies actually gained in productivity. Invariably the shake-ups resulted, instead, in lower profits and productivity because they destroyed morale, motivation and loyalty. “Perfectly viable businesses were gutted or abandoned, capable employees were set adrift rather than rewarded, simply because the organization had to prove to the market that it was capable of change,” concludes Richard Sennett in *The Corrosion of Character: the personal consequences of work in the new capitalism*.

The “corrosion of character” that Sennett refers to pertains primarily to those lower down in the company, who are expected to be flexible and infinitely malleable so that the top executives can quickly change the direction and structure of the company to adjust to the demands of the market and to global competition. In this game, the bottom line is everything. CEOs may be managing energy companies one year and communications companies the next. The world in which CEOs operate has changed every bit as much as that of their employees.

As the older corporate culture was abandoned, so were the old rules of investment. Middle-class working people saw others getting rich quick in the stock market and pulled their savings out of banks and safe bonds to take advantage of the quick profits being made there. This further fueled the bubble and the tyranny of the bottom line. When the old rules no longer apply and it all becomes a game of smoke and mirrors — how long you can keep investors believing in your capacity to make them rich — it is no wonder that people begin to make up new rules as they go along.

The corruption, I suggest, is not limited to those at the top. And it is not just a matter of personal integrity. Unless we find new, communal structures to work responsibly with the new technology, it will corrupt or corrode our shared character even further.

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Letters

Same-sex marriage court ruling 'a travesty of epic proportions'

Note: This letter is offered as an example by the Christian Heritage Party of Canada. They urge readers to draft their own Letter to the Editor, as well as letters to their Members of Parliament and to the Prime Minister.

On July 12, 2002 an Ontario lower court ruled that homosexual marriages are to be made legal and ordered that the definition of marriage be rewritten within two years to make this possible.

This ruling will be appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada.

An unconstitutional judge

Judges are supposed to read the law as they find it, not make up their own laws. The Ontario Divisional Court judge is substituting her opinion for the law when she says the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman is 'unconstitutional'. Nothing in the constitution supports her decision.

In the House of Commons on June 8, 1999 on the resolution proposed by then-Reform MP, Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre), then-Justice Minister Anne McLellan stated (Hansard, p. 15966-7):

"The definition of marriage, which has been consistently applied in Canada, comes from an 1866 British case which holds that marriage is 'the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.'"

That case and that definition are considered clear law by ordinary Canadians, by academics and by the courts. The courts have upheld the constitutionality of that definition.... I support the motion of maintaining the clear legal definition of marriage in Canada as the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

The Minister of Justice inserted this definition of Marriage in Bill C-23 (same sex benefits, called the Modernization of Benefits and Obligations Act) on March 22, 2000, which provided that nothing in Bill C-23

would change the definition of marriage as "the lawful union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others."

Courts can't change definition of marriage

When Bill C-23 went to the Senate for approval, Senator Anne Cools, pointed out that any change in the definition of marriage as understood by the 1867 British North America Act, could not be changed by the courts, but rather only by a full scale constitutional amendment. She also pointed out that one part of the constitution (the equality section) (S.15) of the Charter of Rights, cannot now be applied to amend another part of our constitution (the 1867 British North America Act), as the two parts are equal and together form one body, that is the Constitution of Canada.

If judges are allowed to make up laws, overruling both the Constitution and Parliament, Canada ceases to be a democracy. The issue here is much bigger than the definition

of marriage: it is the freedom of all Canadians.

It is my hope that when reading these quotes from the September/October 2001 issue of *Reality* many will be inspired to remind their local MP as well as our Prime Minister of what is constitutional and lawful.

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's address is: The Right Hon. Jean Chrétien, 80 Wellington St., 2nd Floor, Ottawa ON K1A 0A2.

This is a travesty of epic proportions. The implications for Parliamentary democracy are horrendous. The homosexual community won't stop at the recognition of same sex marriages. The next step will be to require all churches to perform such ceremonies when requested, or face discrimination suits. One can be sure that a test case will be launched as soon as this becomes the law of the land.

Is this what we as Canadians want?

Annie Kok

Needed: jail terms for corporate criminals, equitable economic growth

Re: Too much in the hands of too few, Editorial page Opinion, The Toronto Star, July 13.

The Toronto Star's Editorial Page Editor Carol Goar perceptively contends: "The only way to dismantle a plutocracy is to sever the link between money and power." Indeed, "As long as wealthy politicians depend on corporate largesse to get elected, America will be governed by the rich, for the rich." As a costly consequence, a wave of corporate scandals has not only hit the U.S.A. — it may also undermine our Canadian democracy and economy.

However, we shall need more than jail terms for prominent white-collar criminals. It is not enough to break up the concentration of power in the hands of a moneyed elite. We must insist on a basic change in core values. Such a conversion must include an economy that is not driven by capitalist, corporate greed.

Different understanding needed

We must advocate a different understanding of economic growth — growth that goes well beyond the ruthless maximization of profit and power and the ideological obsession with the gross national product. Limitless material expansion, which is often gross, is unsustainable. It often causes chronic poverty (at home and abroad), structural unemployment (especially among the young), and environmental pollution and even death (think of the Walkerton tragedy).

Equitable economic growth could be described as the responsible, sustainable development of human gifts and natural resources that would meet legitimate human needs and contribute to the environmental and socio-economic well-being of all people.

Stewardly economics would be shaped by a consistent commitment to human dignity, mutual respect and responsibility, economic equity, social justice, environmental

integrity and fiscal fairness. I view mutual respect as a way to justice and mutual responsibility as a tie that binds, linking people and communities through bonds of equity and fairness and deeds of compassion and solidarity.

Building a caring and sharing society

Integrated economic, social and political responsibility would be:

- Concerned for the needs of people and future generations;
- Respectful in the treatment of the environment;
- Careful in the use of resources;
- Watchful in the prevention of waste;
- Frugal in the consumption of energy;
- Just in the employment of workers;
- Careful in the use of technology;
- Fair in the setting of prices and fees;
- Equitable in the earning of profit and wages;
- Honest in the promotion of sales and services.

Such personal and communal socio-economic engagement would help build a nation with hope and promise — a caring and sharing society. The coherent practice of mutual-ity and sustainability would shape our public life together and strengthen our economic endeavours, educational enterprises, social

structures and political institutions.

Life-affirming principles and public-justice policies would actively seek the common good of all people.

Such a nation, strong and free, would be filled with concerned citizens actually doing justice, showing mercy, and practicing faithfulness, because they loyally defend voiceless children, vulnerable families and other defenceless victims. These needy neighbors, like all of us, are equally entitled to a quality way of life that respects the human needs and rights of all God's creatures, without discrimination of any kind.

Too much money and power in the hands of a few corporations and power-hungry politicians is causing too much misery and

suffering in the daily lives of too many people and communities. We owe it to Canada and our wounded world to work for the public good inspired by equal justice for all, especially the poor and weary.

Gerald Vandezande, C.M.
Scarborough, Ont.

Gerald Vandezande is the former National Public Affairs Director of Citizens for Public Justice, and a volunteer spokesperson for the Campaign Against Child Poverty. Vandezande is the author of Justice, Not Just Us: Faith perspectives and national priorities, available from the Public Justice Resource Centre, Suite 311, 229 College Street, Toronto M5T 1R4.

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Letter/Education

There's more to the African famine story

I appreciated reading the recent article on the food crisis in southern Africa (July 15, 2002), and the attempt to outline some of the fundamental causes of such a terrible tragedy. As we attempt to understand and explain these things, it is natural for us to simplify and use quick and common explanations. However, it is my sense that we tend to feel safer when we can define the causes of human tragedy, such as famine, as either a) natural, God-given phenomena such as too little or too much rain, or b) as a result of the failings and mismanagement of corrupt and undemocratic political regimes.

These two factors are distant enough from us that we feel safe from a sense of personal responsibility. In the case of the famine in Malawi, the above mentioned causes are certainly contributing factors, but there is clearly more to the story. Several important points were missing from this story. You note that Malawi "sold its entire national grain reserves" and equate this fact to the corrupt political regime.

IMF, World Bank worsen Malawi's situation

What you fail to point out, however, is that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank forced the government of Malawi to sell strategic grain reserves in exchange for foreign currency in order to pay down the country's debt. This, according to Horst Koehler, Managing Director of the IMF, in a hearing in the British Parliament, was an example of the multilateral institutions not being "attentive enough" to the reality of the situation in Malawi.

This all takes place within the larger issue of poor countries' indebtedness to Western governments and banks. Management of

Malawi's economic policies are being determined by the country's creditors and when Malawi was seen to be going slightly "off track", the IMF withheld \$47 million in aid and Western governments were advised to do the same. This further perpetuated an already difficult situation for the people of Malawi.

Don't want responsibility

I write not to simply articulate some of the larger causes of this crisis — because they are too complex to effectively do so in a short letter — but to raise the question of our own desire for safety from responsibility. We are afraid to point out our own complicity in these tragedies, preferring to blame them on someone or something else distant from us. Our governments are elected by us, the people, and if they are complicit in the suffering of the people of Malawi, then it somehow reflects on us. We don't want the responsibility, so we blame it on the weather and the backward leaders of Malawi.

We have to stand up to these fears, raise our voices of compassion and concern and tell our governments that we believe that more just solutions are possible. Let's work with the government of Malawi to strengthen its economy and democracy. Let's reduce their debt so they can effectively manage their own country. Let's work to build and strengthen local communities through national and international development organizations. And, most importantly, let's look each other in the eye, recognize our own failings, and seek to find solutions based on biblical justice and Christian compassion.

Matt Van Geest
Christian Reformed World
Relief Committee (CRWRC)
Burlington, Ont.

Saying 'good-bye' to a son or daughter

"When I dropped off my son at public university, I felt like I was handing him over to Satan," said one mother to me, giving dramatic voice to the fears she had about such a large and diverse atmosphere. University certainly is a new world, full of possibilities — possibilities for learning and maturity, as well as possibilities for rebellion, confusion, and deep loneliness. Or maybe both. One thing is for sure, though: it involves a separation of parent from child. Stanley Hauerwas, a popular evangelical theologian, describes his experience of separation from his Southern farming community in this way:

"Love meant working hard enough to give me the opportunity to go to college so that I might have more opportunity than my parents had. And go on I did in abstruse subjects like philosophy and theology. And the further I went the more unlike my parents I became. I gradually learned to recognize that blacks had been unfairly treated and that the word 'nigger' could no longer pass my lips. I also learned that Christianity involved more than a general admonition to live a decent life, which made belief in God at once more difficult and easy. And I learn to appreciate art and music which simply did not exist for my parents. Married to a woman my parents would always have difficulty understanding, I then made my way to Yale...."

Hauerwas, by now a pacifist, then goes on to tell of the conflict that arose when his father, with all the best intentions, gave him giant rifle as a present.

Waiting for the blessing

Sons and daughters will undoubtedly change while at university. They will broaden, deepen, and grow in ways one might never have expected. But good parents recognize that God gifts us with these strangers we call children, and while they are under our direct authority and control for a time, there comes a time when we must hand them over again — not to Satan, but to God. At a child's baptism we promise to do the best we can to bring them up in faith, and at this point, the best thing we can do is bless them and send them on their way.

What do I mean by 'blessing'? By blessing I mean recognizing that you have given them an inheritance of faith and wisdom, and that the time has come to freely give it. This involves releasing them from your expectations and discipline and handing them over to God's protection and their own personal responsibility. It means giving them encouragement, support and genuine acceptance as they take their inheritance deeper into the Kingdom, or at the very least, into God's world. This needs to come with no strings attached — emotional or otherwise. "There is a fine line between support and manipulation," said a wise parent to me. If we know ourselves at all, we are well aware of how subtle remarks and even the tone of our

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman



DAN CALLIS

University certainly is a new world, full of possibilities — possibilities for learning and maturity, as well as possibilities for rebellion, confusion, and deep loneliness.

language can betray messages that do other than bless. This is not to say parents must approve of everything a student decides to do. One holds on to one's lifestyle commitments and traditions, of which children should be generally aware. But they need open space to experiment, explore, and make mistakes. There will be pain. There will be regrets. And this is how our character is shaped by God.

Cursing your child by withholding blessing

To withhold a blessing — to keep it always just out of reach — is to chain your child with a profound burden. To withhold our touch, our words of love and acceptance, our prayers of concern, is indirectly a form of cursing, and may prevent a student from taking significant risks or forming intimate relationships that would otherwise bring them further along life's road. Don't underestimate your words of blessing. Because we appreciate the same from God, who neither neglects nor coerces us. At the end of every worship service we receive a blessing: "The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face towards you, and give you peace." (Num. 6:24)

A blessing is a gift of grace to those who do not deserve it. Our spouses, friends, and guests need it as much as our children do. It is a daily practice of passing on what God is giving to us in love through Jesus by his Holy Spirit.

The air that is breathed at a public university rarely gives oxygen to the lungs of Christian faith. But God is there, as much as he is anywhere else in his world. So is the church, if one is willing to look. Therefore, parents can, in good faith, say "Good-bye" to their student sons and daughters. For "good-bye" is a contraction of an older farewell: "God be with you."



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

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Media

Christian media outperforming churches in reaching adults with Gospel message

VENTURA, Calif. (EP) — Evangelical mass media is doing a better job at reaching adults with the gospel than churches are, according to a study by the California-based Barna Research Group. "A greater number of adults experience the Christian faith through Christian media, such as radio, television or books, than attend Christian churches," noted a press release from Barna.

Christian media more popular than church

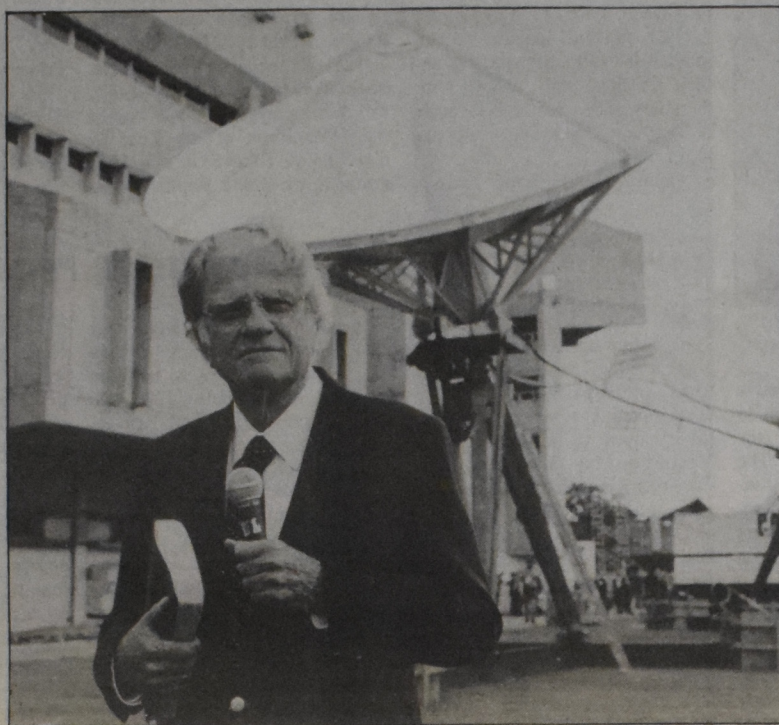
The study found that while 63 per cent of adults in the U.S. attended church during the past month, some 67 per cent made use of at least one of three of the most popular forms of Christian media — radio, television, or books. The study found that about 141 million adults in America made use of Christian media in the month studied, compared to 132 million adults who went to a church service.

According to the survey, a little more than half of America's adults had listened to a Christian radio program during the month studied. About 38 per cent of those polled said they had listened to a program focusing on teaching, preaching, or a talk-show format. By contrast, 43 per cent said they had listened to the fastest growing format — Christian music.

Christian radio reaches 109 million

Barna found that when talk and music formats were combined, Christian radio programming reached about 52 per cent of America's adults during an average month — a total of 109 million people.

The Barna study noted that the explosion of cable and satellite television broadcasting over the last few years has equated into an increase in adults viewing Christian television programming. According to Barna, during the month studied, 43 per cent of adults viewed some form of Christian television. Noted a Barna statement, "Whereas the three largest broadcast networks formerly controlled the airwaves, claiming more than 90 per cent of the audience,



Billy Graham: a pioneer in the use of modern media for evangelism. A recent survey shows a surprisingly high percentage of non-Christians tune in to Christian media.

the advent of countless cable and satellite channels has utterly fragmented the audience these days. The aggregate adult audience for Christian programming during the past month was 90 million people — approximately the same number who attend Christian churches in any given week."

Christian publishing has also enjoyed its share of the adult market. According to the survey, some 33 per cent of U.S. adults said they had read a Christian fiction or non-fiction book (other than the Bible) during the month studied. The survey also found that the percentage "represents 70 million people reading Christian books in the past month. Realize that among the country's top-selling books are several Christian titles, including the latest offering in the 'Left Behind' series by Jerry Jenkins and Timothy LaHaye, books in the Jabez series by Bruce Wilkinson, and business books by former pastor John Maxwell."

More Protestants use Christian media

The survey found that adults who identified themselves as politically conservative were twice as likely to be users of Christian media than were those who considered themselves liberal. Protestants were twice as likely as Catholics to

use Christian media, and those living in the Southern U.S. were far more inclined to pick up a Christian book or turn on Christian radio or television than were adults living in the Northeast or the West. The survey found that women were more likely than men to access Christian media, and blacks were the ethnic/racial group most likely to gravitate toward it.

More popular with lower incomes

The survey found that those households with incomes less than the national average turned to Christian media the most, while households with income levels at the highest scales used it the least. Overall, Christian media usage increased among adults until they reached their mid-70s in age, when, according to the survey, there was somewhat of a drop-off.

Barna found that nearly all evangelical Christians had some exposure to Christian media, with 84 per cent having listened to religious radio programming, and around 67 per cent viewing a Christian television program or reading a Christian book. Some 80 per cent of non-evangelical born-again Christians had been exposed to some type of Christian media, the survey found, while half of "non-tional" Christians (those who call

themselves such but were not born-again) had used some form of Christian media.

Even atheists tune in

One finding that seemed to affirm the evangelistic potential of Christian media was that 44 per cent of Americans who associate with a non-Christian faith had some interaction with Christian media during the month surveyed. Even more surprising was the finding that 37 per cent of adults who considered themselves either "atheist" or "agnostic" said they had been exposed to the Christian faith through something they read, watched on television, or listened to on the radio.

In fact, research head George Barna noted that over 25 per cent of the group comprised of atheists, agnostics, and those aligned with non-Christian faiths intentionally listened to Christian radio, 25 per cent of them purposely viewed Christian television, and around 14 per cent intentionally read a Christian book. "In other words, of the 50 million adults who are not aligned with Christianity, there were more than 15 million who had some degree of exposure to Christianity through these media," explained Barna.

The study also found that among the 65 million unchurched adults in the U.S. (those who had not attended a regularly scheduled church service in the previous six months), around 27 million had been exposed to Christianity through radio, television, or books during the month studied. Christian radio, because of its accessibility, was the medium 27 per cent of unchurched adults used most.

"Increasing numbers of people are involved in informal discussion groups regarding faith matters, participate in faith forums and in-home worship activities, or use the Internet for faith exploration and communications," explained Barna. "As our culture continues to embrace new forms of education, interaction and relationships, while maintaining a felt need for connection to God, it is important to recognize that traditional Christian activities such as evangelism, worship and discipleship may happen outside of a church building for many people — including millions of individuals who have no

interest or intention of visiting a church."

Supplementing worship

The survey found that 78 per cent of all church-attending adults supplement their weekly worship with Christian media, and among the 33 per cent of adults who have what Barna labeled "active faith" (demonstrated by regular Bible reading, church attendance, and prayer), some 93 per cent used at least one of the three major Christian media forms during the month studied.

Barna said that as the quality of Christian media has risen, and as it has become more accessible and convenient, its appeal and influence has risen in American society. "Great strides have been made in these media in the past decade or two," said Barna. "But adults have standard qualifications for any media they will accept, whether it has a Christian orientation or not. The content must meet their personal needs, the quality must be up to the standards of the day, and the medium must fit into hectic, fast-paced, unpredictable schedules. The Christian media industry has come a long way from the days when it simply aired or transcribed sermons. Much of the substance now available directly addresses the felt needs of contemporary society, using the technology and information that makes the presentations interesting and relevant."

Media can't replace relationships

Barna warned, however, that Christian media cannot replace the personal relationships upon which true Christian community is based. "In essence, Christianity is about relationships — a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ that is fostered through supportive relationships with other Christians," he said. "The Christian media are helpful in focusing people's attention on things that matter. That focus is greatly enhanced when impersonal media presentations are made practical through supportive community. Unless there is a degree of personal accountability upheld through loving and focused relationships, Christianity becomes only an intellectual faith, and Christians run the danger of becoming modern-day Pharisees. The people factor must always be incorporated if Christianity is to be a genuine expression of God's intent."

Church

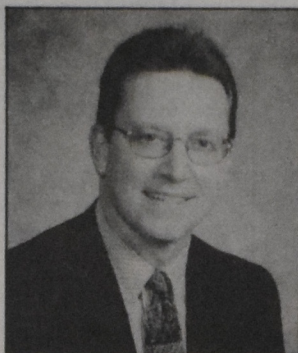
Calvin Theological Seminary welcomes its sixth president

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Calvin Theological Seminary will celebrate the inauguration of its sixth president on Friday, September 27, 2002 with a variety of events.

Plantinga's talented family

The Reverend Dr. Cornelius Plantinga Jr. will make his day of inauguration a family affair. And why not? His family's talents are numerous. His brother Alvin Plantinga, the John O'Brien Professor of Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, will lecture at 1:30 p.m. in the Calvin College Chapel on "Against Naturalism." At 3 p.m., also in the Calvin College Chapel, another brother, Leon Plantinga, the Henry L. and Lucy G. Moses Professor of Music at Yale University, will present a piano recital/lecture entitled "Schumann in the 1830s: A Decade of Piano Music." Both events are free and open to all.

The day will kick off with the dedication of new building additions and renovations at the Seminary. At 10 a.m. Seminary students, staff and faculty will gather in the Student Center to celebrate a \$5 million construction and renovation project that includes a



Rev. Dr. Cornelius Plantinga Jr.

Student Center, new administrative offices and a Covenant Room to accommodate meetings of the board of trustees and faculty. The changes have been numerous, including complete redecoration, new carpet and two new elevators that make the seminary barrier-free for the first time. That event is free and open to all.

The day will conclude with a worship service in the Calvin College Fine Arts Center auditorium and a reception following the service at Calvin Theological Seminary. There is no charge for the

service but tickets are required for the worship service and reception because of space limitations.

Activities will include a picnic at noon for Seminary students and their families, staff, faculty, and members of the Seminary's Board of Trustees. That event is not open to the public.

Plantinga is the former Dean of

the Chapel at Calvin College and prior to that was a professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary. He is a noted author, theologian and speaker. His book, *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*, was named the 1996 Book of the Year by *Christianity Today*. He is a 1963 graduate of Grand Rapids Chris-

tian High School, a 1967 graduate of Calvin College and a 1971 graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary. He earned a Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1979 and then returned to Calvin Theological Seminary as a professor. Plantinga is a member of Woodlawn Christian Reformed Church.

Two Nigerian churches have reconciliation

WUKARI, Nigeria (REC) — Two Reformed denominations in Nigeria have vowed to "reject [their] bitter pasts and move toward opening a new chapter in [their] lives as God's people." Meeting on May 15, officials of the Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria and of the Reformed Church of Christ of Nigeria took steps to heal a rift that dated from a church split in 1973.

Trying to mend schism

Eighteen officials from the two churches issued a joint communiqué trying to mend the schism. They acknowledged their maltreatment of each other, and that they had "provoked each other to anger and to wanton and senseless destruction of each other's lives and personal effects."

The communiqué urged that steps be taken to accept and respect

each other. It urged patience over past sufferings. Concretely, they urged pulpit exchanges between the two, and invitations to each other's meetings. The leaders should bring back a message of forgiveness and love to their respective churches.

The communiqué was to be presented to the synods of each denomination in late June. At the time of this writing, the synods' actions were not known. The communiqué concluded that this meeting was not an effort at church reunion, but aimed to "foster unity, better understanding and a better relationship."

Four years ago, these two churches had their offices in the same town, Takum, when a local war broke out there. Members from these denominations found themselves caught up in that ethnic conflict. At their request, the REC and

the Christian Reformed Church in North America helped facilitate the start of a peace process there. That peace process has expanded to include community leaders and representatives from all levels of society. In May 2001, community leaders signed a peace agreement.

Organizers of the peace process in Nigeria have now presented this agreement to officials and the community, and the community has made progress in starting to live together again.

From the beginning, those helping to guide the peace process hoped that reconciliation between these two churches would be part of it. A permanent peace would be difficult to maintain if enmity remained between the churches. This first step may eventually heal some wounds from the split almost 30 years ago.

Bishops in Congo urge controls on oil production, revenues

Raymond Bitemo

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo (ENI) — Roman Catholic bishops in the Republic of the Congo-Brazzaville have called for reforms in the country's oil policy in an effort to stem the country's economic woes.

In a recent statement, the bishops urged the creation of a committee composed of state, church and civil society representatives to oversee the country's oil production and revenues.

Oil is core of Congo's economy

Oil is at the core of the Congo's economy, accounting for more than 90 per cent of its exports and two-thirds of its revenues. Yet average Congolese are not seeing the benefits of its exploitation, the bishops argue.

"How can we understand that three decades of drilling new oil wells has not been accompanied by any visible sign of improvement in the social situation of our popula-

tion?" the eight bishops asked in a statement issued on July 11.

The bishops drew a connection between the country's oil policy and its social and economic woes. Wars that have been tearing the country apart for the past decade, poverty (70 per cent of Congolese live below the poverty line), growing inequalities between rich and poor, pollution and excessive public debt — all these were caused by a "lack of transparency and the unfair distribution of oil revenues", said the eight bishops.

Oil should be treated as a "combustible, not for death, debt, violence, dictatorship, civil war, but for the progress and well-being of the Congolese people," the bishops argued.

The law they propose would open the way to dialogue between the government, other sectors of society and oil companies in seeking a solution to the country's debt. It would fix the percentages of revenues to be redistributed between

the central government and the country's various regions and would secure savings for the time when oil production in the country is exhausted.

The bishops also addressed a "call to ecclesiastical solidarity" to the conferences of Catholic bishops of European Union countries — in particular those in France and Norway — asking them to "put pressure on the French company TotalFinaElf demanding that its management of oil be transparent".

Recognizing the delicacy of the subject of oil within Congolese-French relations, the bishops explained that the church needed to "defend the cause of the poor and denounce injustices, inequalities between rich and poor".

Their declaration comes at a time when the Congo is living in fear of a new civil war. A renewed anxiety has permeated the country ever since "ninja" rebels launched a surprise attack on the capital on June 14.

Confirmation cards bring perks to teenagers at German church

Frauke Brauns

BIELEFELD, Germany (ENI) — With a marketing technique more common to airlines or retailers trying to build client loyalty, a church in northern Germany has issued confirmation cards entitling the parish's younger members to discounts in local shops.

A Lutheran pastor in Sachsenhagen has created a plastic card identifying teenagers enrolled in his church's confirmation class. (Confirmation is the equivalent of profession of faith in Reformed churches.)

Each card has a photograph of the holder, which helps the teenagers feel special and identify with their confirmation group, said the pastor, and they can use their confirmation cards to get reductions on certain purchases.

The pastor convinced 25 business owners in Sachsenhagen — including a hairdresser, a cinema, a drugstore and a department store — to join the confirmation card program. Every month, one of the stores offers a discount to the confirmation class.

Timo, a 13-year-old participant, is pleased to find that the card opens certain doors: "We got free entrance to the ice-skating ring in December, and this month we get free entrance to the outdoor swimming pool."

In return for their privileges, confirmands have certain responsibilities. At the end of the year, shortly before confirmation, they are expected to volunteer for two weeks in a community institution, such as the senior citizens' home or the hospital, or to perform some other social service.

The card was not intended to convince teenagers to join the confirmation class, the pastor told ENI. "I introduced the campaign well after lessons started." But he is planning to continue the campaign and is hopeful that the regional church to which his parish belongs, will use the idea in its other parish churches.

Church

Canadian Catholics want to go their own way on social issues, poll finds

Ferdy Baglo

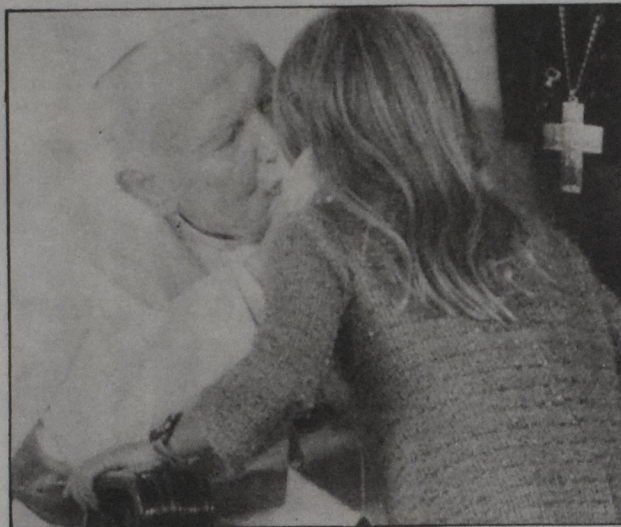
VANCOUVER, (ENI) — A poll released just prior to the arrival of Pope John Paul II in Canada on 23 July for the Roman Catholic Church's World Youth Day in Toronto suggests that a majority of Canadian Catholics disagree with many of the basic tenets of their church.

The poll, commissioned by the *National Post* newspaper, shows that 82 per cent of respondents believe priests should be allowed to marry, and 80 per cent think women should be allowed into the priesthood. Almost as many — 70 per cent — said that divorced persons should be permitted to remarry, and 70 per cent favored abandoning the church's ban on birth control.

The pollsters contacted 451 people who were either born into the Catholic faith or converted to Catholicism: 48 per cent said they were "believing" Catholics; 39 per cent were "lapsed"; and 10 per cent said they were no longer Catholics. The results of the poll are considered accurate within 4.5 percentage points.

Pick-and-choose style

University of Lethbridge Professor Reginald Bibby, a leading expert on religious trends in Canada who has conducted polls for several decades, told ENI the newspaper poll results concurred on the whole with his own findings.



Pope John Paul II kisses 10-year-old Georgia Giddings just after his arrival at Toronto's airport.

Bibby summed up his research observations in *The Globe and Mail* on 23 July: "While close to one in two Canadians viewed themselves as Roman Catholic, a majority were exhibiting a pick-and-choose style that was readily evident in declining attendance, the selective adoption of beliefs, practices, and values, and the widespread ignoring of church teachings in the area of sexuality — including sex outside marriage, birth control, abortion and homosexuality."

Bibby told ENI: "What we find is that the majority of Catholics across the board are not holding to the teachings of the Catholic Church.... But there are important differences between those who are actively involved [in the church] and those who are not."

And in some issues, such as abortion, if a woman's life were endangered, "even the majority of weekly [church] attenders would break with the Catholic Church."

Monsignor Peter Schonenbach, general secretary of the Canadian

Conference of Catholic Bishops, told ENI the poll was fair and the results were not surprising, given the strength of secular influences everywhere. "It is only one poll, a snapshot, as polls are," he told ENI. "They make us think — and I hope will also make the bishops see — that there is a lot of work still to be done."

Particularly interesting, Schonenbach said, were two of the findings: "That the 39 per cent of lapsed Catholics still keep their foot in the door," and that those surveyed went to confession twice a year, as often as many "good bread-and-butter Catholics" go, Schonenbach said.

Married priests not a closed subjects

With respect to priestly celibacy, Schonenbach said: "The Vatican has taken a particular stand on the question of married priests. On the other hand, there have been interesting situations where Anglican priests who are married have been accepted into the church. It isn't by any means a completely closed subject. We are part of a universal church and what might seem to fit in one country may not necessarily fit elsewhere. It's the price we pay for being a universal church."

Tobias Raschke, spokesperson for We are Church Youth, which is linked to a worldwide Catholic reform movement and was monitoring World Youth Day, told ENI:

"The survey shows clearly that Canadian Catholics are dissatisfied with the present fundamentalist policy of the Roman hierarchy. If the church wants to be relevant in the future it has got to listen to real people — and the real people are the young people."

The poll "shows clearly that we [the reform movement] represent the majority of committed Catholics," Raschke continued. "The demand for reforms since the Second Vatican Council [1962-65] cannot be stopped despite all attempts of the Roman Curia and conservative groups within the church."

About 200,000 young people registered for World Youth Day — considerably fewer than the 450,000 originally expected — and only a fraction of those at previous youth day events, which have often attracted millions.

The poor turnout is variously attributed to the Sept. 11 World Trade Center disaster, conflicts within the North American church and early fear that the Pope would not turn up for the event due to poor health.

Some youth turned away by Immigration Canada

Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), a 2,000-member ecumenical coalition of individuals and organizations, claimed that Canadian immigration authorities might have had something to do with the low numbers. The agency claimed that many applicants from poor countries hoping to attend World Youth Day had been turned down by Immigration Canada for fear that they might make refugee claims once they arrived in the country.

CPJ said in a statement that it was "scandalous... if only the wealthy can come to spiritual events in Canada. So what if some of these young people did make refugee claims? Maybe some of them have legitimate reasons to leave their homes under whatever guise they can find in search of safe harbor. "Canada continues to say that our doors are open to those in need, even as we act more and more defensively to block the way to the door."

Several Catholic activist groups campaigning for changes in church policies are working among the pilgrims. One group is handing out condoms in protest against the church's stand on abortion and birth control.

Many of the pilgrims have resisted these campaigns, telling the news media they have come to Youth Day to celebrate their faith and deepen their commitment to Jesus Christ, not to debate church policies.

German politician's nomination undermines Christian values, says cardinal

Frauke Brauns

BIELEFELD, Germany (ENI) — Germany's conservative opposition leader has provoked the ire of Roman Catholic leaders by nominating an unmarried mother to be his minister for family affairs if he wins this year's general election.

Edmund Stoiber is representing the country's two main conservative parties, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU), in the election to be held in September.

Parties' values questioned

The parties are traditionally conservative on social questions and claim their policies are based on Christian values.

But a Catholic leader said Stoiber was undermining the Christian conception of marriage

and the family by nominating Katherina Reiche as minister for the family.

Cardinal Joachim Meisner of Cologne said it would be "more consistent and more honest to remove the word Christian from the parties' names."

Reiche has a three-year-old daughter and lives with, but is not married to, her daughter's father. The couple is expecting a second child in August.

Reiche's nomination was welcomed by the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, one of Germany's main newspapers.

It was a sign that the conservative parties were catching up with the times, and that they now recognized that a man and a woman can have children and be happy without formalizing their relationship, the newspaper said.

But in an interview with a

Catholic newspaper, Meisner criticized the nomination.

He said that by describing the nomination as a "decision of principle", Stoiber was making

Poll finds religion lost respect

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Religion Today) — According to a report in the *Washington Times*, American confidence in religious institutions is at a 30-year low, down to 45 per cent. The results from an annual Gallup Poll show that while the Protestant confidence rate of 59 per cent is about the same as a year ago, Catholic trust dropped to 42 per cent.

"Although this year's poll broke down respondents into Protestant and Catholic for comparison, it usually does not make that distinction," said the *Times*. The Gallup

"marriage without a wedding certificate" the model for marriage and the family.

This called into question the values of society, the cardinal said.

confidence poll in 1991, however, found that Catholics and Protestants were virtually the same in how they ranked religion.

The *Times* report said that the last time religion's public image decreased so drastically was in 1989, when the televangelist scandals regarding sex and money pushed down American confidence in religion to 52 per cent. The implications for this year's elections are clearly more tied to Roman Catholic issues, said James Guth, professor of political science at Furman University.

Christian Living

Why go to church? (2)

To keep up a custom

A.A. van Ruler

After reading what follows, you might come to the conclusion that this is a flimsy answer. Is that all — to go to church just to keep up a custom?

On the other hand, no matter how flimsy, it is an answer. Remember: it isn't the only answer. There are many others that can be given that will add meat to the communal pot. But it's a viable answer. And we should consider it, even if it is only to touch all the bases.

To say "I only go to church when I feel the desire" can sound very real — but isn't it often just an alibi, just hot air?

At first glance perhaps the motive of custom calls forth a rather scornful reaction, but on closer inspection it may turn out to be a more substantial and more important answer than first appears. Here, too, appearances may be deceiving. Going to church out of custom or habit may appear to be worthless, but that doesn't make it so.

Value in and of itself

In any case, there are still a lot of people who keep up the custom of going to church regularly. They don't stop to think about it; they go purely out of custom. It is nothing more or less than a weekly routine.

The funny thing is that we can take this thoughtless custom and think it over. It's not my intention to mention this motive just to introduce other, more worthwhile motives. I want to think about this custom as a custom. I want to reflect on the value it has in and of itself.

This in turn is part of the broader question regarding the meaning of custom and the formation of custom (habit) for human life all across the board.

We can reflect on custom because we are outsiders and onlookers. We don't consider ourselves to be such creatures of habit but observe it at a distance in the lives of our neighbors. And we question the value of such a life lived out of custom. But even those custom-bound folk can stop to think, and they can do so even about their customary way of life. They might even come to the conclusion that custom — as custom — has much going for it and then go on to draw the conclusion

that they want to keep up the custom deliberately. The outsiders and onlookers might even come to the same conclusion and say, 'Wow! There's something good about that kind of life: I'm going to take up that custom too. From now on I'm going to church with the conscious motive of making it a habit.'

All kinds of protests

But when we say we go to church out of custom, it evokes all kinds of protests that it is a superficial, banal and bourgeois answer. Many will cry, "Away with custom and routine. It makes everything merely external and therefore worthless. I only go to church when I feel the desire. Only then is it genuine."

Let me pose a couple of questions. Is it really true that something is completely worthless if it is just external? Is the outside, the surface, appearance without any significance? Is only inwardness, interiority, the depths of any significance? What's the score with humankind?

Isn't your face your most outward part? But isn't it also your most expressive part? It is the expression and externalization of your inwardness. Can we separate outside and inside and contrast them in this way? Isn't this one of the deadly dogmas of modernity that are destroying us?

One more question. Do we really have an inward desire to go to church? What happens in practice when we go only when that desire moves us? Do we end up going very often?

Going to church eagerly

Of course, there are those with a deep inner life who go to church eagerly. That's very praiseworthy. To go to church out of desire is a worthy point of view. But we must not absolutize it. Then the principle of inwardness becomes a dangerous tyrant.

But let's put that aside. Let me ask a simple question. How often does it happen that you are seized by a pure, irresistible desire to go to church? Often our hearts are as dead and barren as a field in winter. Anyone with any self-knowledge at all will hesitate to speak from such a height. He won't be so quick to say, I only go when I feel the desire.

This brings me to my third question: Can we really as human beings rely on our feelings to motivate us? Can we build our lives on them and allow them to shape our lives? Can we do so in

our marriages? In our families? In our jobs? In business and politics? To say "I only go to church when I feel the desire" can sound very real — "authentic" is the word often used — but isn't it often just an alibi, just hot air?

Custom need not be a routine

But that isn't the end of the story. We must ask ourselves whether this is really the only option before us — either outward routine or inner desire. Aren't there many other possibilities?

A custom need not necessarily be a routine. It might, for example, be a question of *style*. A person may not want to live from moment to moment like a leaf blown in the wind. He may wish to give form to his life, consciously set some boundaries — live life not like a sloppy, oversized sweater but like a well-tailored suit. To go to church regularly is to give one's life a certain style.

Or a custom might be a matter of *duty*. This word has acquired a distasteful connotation nowadays. We say, "A person has rights." That sounds good. But to keep matters whole, we also have to say, "A person has duties." Doesn't faith bring with it the duty of church attendance? Do we not have duties over toward the fellowship of believers? At a deeper level, don't we as creatures have duties over toward the God who is our Creator and Redeemer?

Custom can be a calling

Custom can also be a matter of *calling*. One's entire existence can be experienced as a calling. We were called into being. We are called to fulfil a purpose. We are also called to salvation. That's a very startling idea. But there is a Voice that calls us. The chords of existence are tuned by that call. And they reach their crescendo in the hymns of Sunday worship.

If we experience the custom of church-going in one of these ways, it is no longer a mere routine or rut. It is also not just a matter of desire. It is a synthesis, a union and integration between the outward and the inward. Only in this way do we find our way into the fullness of life. And going to church belongs to this fullness.

These construals — style, duty, calling — belong to the essence of custom. When we see the full meaning of this idea, it turns out to have many good and worthwhile sides to it.

To my way of thinking, one of the most worthwhile sides is that custom frees us from the awful necessity of having to decide every



REFLEX PICTURES/DENIS DORAN

moment again. We need not make things more difficult than need be. Sometimes we need to cut through the knot and make a conscious choice, but not always by any means. One can also take on a custom. Then things go on their own. Life is ironed into pleats. Once they're in, they're there to stay.

A *style* sticks with you. A *duty* becomes easier, and gradually it turns into a delight. A *calling* becomes an echo in human existence.

Sunday comes along: shall we go to church or not? No question about it; it's Sunday, so we go as a matter of course.

Day of rest or resurrection

Another advantage of church-going as custom is that in this way we experience the rhythm of time more intensely. This rhythm arises from the fact that Tuesday isn't Monday, but above all because Sunday is Sunday, the first day of the new week. The day of rest. Or rather: the day of resurrection. We experience this rhythm most intensely when we keep Sunday by going to church. Then we feel the rhythm of time the way a swimmer feels the waves in the sea. He bobs up and down with them, feeling the alternating rhythm, the variety.

There's a time for work and a time for worship. The pulse of the worship service fills our Sunday and from there the entire week.

The element of regularity

There's another positive side to going to church to keep up a custom: it brings with it the element of regularity. To go every Sunday without a second thought guarantees the durability, the interconnectedness, the continuity of praise and worship. The light must be kept burning. Where else does God live than on the praise of Israel? Without faithful worship, the world threatens to become a madhouse. Perhaps somehow everything depends on keeping up this custom of going to church regularly.

There is also the affirmation of community. The community — the congregation — should be able to count on me. We must seriously take this into account. One can only build fellowship on faithful members. And building and maintaining a fellowship with its own style is surely worthwhile. Those who go to church only once in a while turn themselves into consumers. And then the church is reduced to the clergy who run a shop where

Christian Living

customers can come to buy a bit of grace.

One more positive side to education. We must not forget the educational value of a fixed habit. In our words and deeds we must also think of the next generation. What "speaks" most effectively to our children? Words? Or are symbols and images and customs more important? As children are growing up, an environment fed with customs can be extremely meaningful to them.

Customs hard to keep up

But in our day customs are hard to keep up. There is the strange phenomenon that customs — every custom — are always in danger of ossifying. We get used to them and

after awhile they become boring. We get our fill of them. We begin to look around for a change. Although you cannot perhaps be sermonized to death, you can get pretty sick and tired of sermons. The excitement can go out of the worship service. Of course, one person is more easily bored than another. And our time is characterized by a hyper-activity, that is, by a neurotic desire for change simply for its own sake. We must be aware of this danger, but that doesn't mean we should do away with custom; instead, we must seek as much as possible to revitalize it.

The custom of church-going is also threatened by another custom practiced by great numbers of people — *not* going to church. Yes,

that is also a custom. For most it is not thought through either. They stay away without giving it a thought. It's part of their lifestyle. We are, after all, part of the herd, and if the majority went to church, it would be simple to go along. But when the majority stays away, it takes will-power and deliberation to keep going.

In earlier times, people were drawn to the church as institution; then followed a period when they went for enlightenment; nowadays people seem to want to be entertained. No doubt, the worship service does have some entertainment value, but it can hardly be touted as a form of entertainment. If you don't want to think about the eternal significance and seriousness of

life and reality, church is not the place to be.

Custom transformed into desire and inner delight

On the other hand, by consciously keeping up the custom of church-going, you can become so accustomed to it that you simply can no longer do without it. Your entire week is energized by your Sunday church attendance. The gospel and worship sustain you all your life and even when you're on your deathbed. Gradually custom is transformed into desire and inner delight. This doesn't mean you go out of desire — not if this means going out of restlessness, in a search for rest. What I have in mind is something very different: to go to

church in peace and with joy.

Secondly, even if the churchgoers are few, as long as they go faithfully the church is not bankrupt. How many institutions beside the church can keep people coming week after week, year after year? How many millions in donations are given voluntarily by churchgoers? How much time and effort do they devote to the church?

Yes, as long as people keep going faithfully, even if they are but a few there is still hope. The barren hedge can suddenly sprout new life in the spring. This, too, is part of keeping up church-going as a custom: to keep it up even through the winter, waiting patiently for the spring to break through.

Let the telephone ring

Lisa M. Petsche

As a mental health professional, I'm concerned that, in spite of the existence of e-mail and high-tech answering systems, many people are slaves to the telephone.

No longer is it enough to be accessible at home, at work or even in transit. People now attach a phone to themselves so it can go absolutely everywhere with them — to the shopping mall, the parent-teacher meeting, the playground, the gym, the movie theatre, the wedding reception. I have even seen parents walking their children to school while chatting on the phone.

I realize some people consider cell phones crucial to their line of work. But it concerns me when anyone believes they must always be available to colleagues or clients — or to friends, for that matter.

When mobile phones first came on the market, many people said they wanted them for emergencies, if their car broke down or they got behind schedule and were going to be late for an appointment. But in practice, they often end up using these handy little communication devices for much more, and giving out the number to dozens of people in the process.

Why would anyone want to be readily available all the time, assuming they're not expecting a life-altering communication?

A feeling of importance

For one thing, knowing others are trying to reach them, however inconvenient the timing may be, gives some people a feeling of importance. Then there is the social status a cell phone seems to confer, especially to teenagers who can



CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

increasingly be seen using them in shopping malls and on the street.

Cell phone etiquette

There is much to be learned when it comes to cell phone etiquette. How polite is it, for instance to be carrying on a conversation with a third party while in the company of acquaintances who aren't privy to the whole exchange? And what about taking calls in the presence of strangers, in close quarters such as a waiting room?

If the conversation is an intimate one, it puts those nearby in an

awkward position. It is disturbing to others when someone is in a meeting and takes a call in front of the group. I have been to workshops and other functions where people have answered their phone and proceeded to converse without removing themselves, disrupting the activities at hand.

But then who can resist a ringing telephone? Most people, it seems, can't stand the suspense of not knowing who is trying to reach them. Never mind that they might be stepping into the shower, eating dinner with their family or on their

way out the door. Never mind, either, that, it might turn out to be a nuisance call. Or that if it's someone who really wants to reach them, they will leave a message or try again later.

Even when engaged on the phone, some people wonder if another party might be trying to contact them, so they sign on for a "call waiting" service. Callers can consider this quite rude, because it suggests to them that you think there might be someone more important or interesting to talk to.

What else to expect, though, in an era of instant-everything, where doing several things at once is considered admirable?

People need to withdraw

The truth is, for the good of their health, people need to be able to slow down and withdraw on a

regular basis, especially from work demands but also from other outside influences.

Protected time by oneself provides opportunities for much-needed spiritual refreshment. We also need to spend time with loved ones free from interruptions. Such times should not be regarded as an occasional indulgence but rather as an ongoing requirement for a balanced life.

Put simply, it's a matter of keeping personal and family priorities straight in a demanding, complicated world. That means going incommunicado more often and letting the answering machine do its job.

Lisa M. Petsche is a clinical social worker, mother of three and freelance writer.

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Opinion

Odd jobs

Ron de Boer

My first paying job was salesman of odd-and-ends. My business partner — my brother, Doug — and I would gather spools of thread, rusty bolts we'd found on the laneway, nifty stones culled from the creek and anything else we could mine from the top drawer of the kitchen desk. Then we filled an eight-quart basket and knocked on the front door of a farmhouse where our best customer — our mother — paid us pennies for paper clips and dull pencils.

She thanked us and said, "see you next week." Then we rounded the lilac bush and knocked on the back door where our father answered and bought a piece of wood from us. Doug held the basket. I made change.

Lesson learned: Don't get lazy or you'll work your- self to death.

Later that summer, we set up a greenhouse on the corner field by the road. We spent all morning building the greenhouse — beautiful sheets of plexiglass, long tables of plants and colorful flowers, a section of firm saplings with burlap bags wrapped around the roots — and the greater part of the afternoon setting up the cash register area where there would be a free bubble gum machine for the kids.

Our sudden surge of entrepreneurship was inspired by our Uncle Joe, who ran a nursery operation in town, and whom we admired whenever our mother dropped by Westside Nurseries to visit her brother. We were going to quit school if we sold enough daisies and small maples that day. We were going to work the fields and smile at ladies who came in to buy flats of geraniums.

But, as the sun fell and we heard the familiar calls of my older brother getting the cows for milking, we grew tired, and as if emerging from a dream, we noticed our greenhouse amounted to three thistles which lay drying on a large rock and several large branches — the sapling section of the operation — leaning against the same rock. We trudged home before our imaginations completely dissolved into the evening air.

Early on, I knew that work was an important part of life. We spent many summer days mimicking the adult world of work. You aren't born the son of immigrants and sit around waiting for someone else to do a job for you. If you were going to be successful, you worked your hind parts off. While everyone has heard that sloth is one of the seven deadly sins, few people realize "Thou shall not be lazy" is a commandment in the Dutch Bible. Even if you weren't busy, the good Dutch Calvinist immigrant in you wanted everyone to believe you were busy. I grew up hearing the word "busy" so often I thought bees had moved into the attic.

Having recently completed my 15th year in the classroom attempting to get the attention of the teenagers staring at me every day, I spent a beautiful summer morning reflecting on the past school year — those students who said thanks as they left the exam room, those students who dropped out and whom I've not seen since. I can say the school year was a good one and the work was rewarding. I remember a retired teacher once saying the one thing he learned is that you never knew what kind of damage you'd done to your students until years later when they vaguely recognized you or they abruptly turned and fled. What had I learned from the various jobs I'd held over the years leading up to this one? I did a little inventory of my work life.

So, I wanted to discover just what I've learned from each of the other odd jobs I've held over the years.

When I was ten, a neighbor phoned and asked me to help throw bales onto the wagon from the "stooks" out in the field. When the tractor started rolling — my brother got that cushy job! — I jumped off the wagon and wildly began heaving bales in the direction of the hired hands stacking the wagon. Then I'd sprint to the next triangle of bales and with unbridled enthusiasm, chucked those bales onto the wagon, too. By the third stook, I felt the strength leave my arms. I was out of breath and staggered in the direction of the next bales. Then I heard the farmer yelling at my brother to stop the tractor. He motioned me over. "A raise already?" I wondered. "Slow and steady wins the race," he said, smiling. "Slow down or I'll have to hire someone to take your place after you work yourself to death." **Lesson number one: don't work yourself to death.**



HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN ILLUSTRATIONS (2)

One October day when I was 13, my father hired me for a day to help harvest the corn. He kept me out of school — payment enough! — and instructed me to meet him at the top of the hill with the old John Deere where he would bring me the just-harvested corn wagon and I would deliver to him the empty one. I had to hitch the forage wagon to the tractor, then pull the wagon to the barn, where I unloaded it before exchanging wagons again.

It was prior to the fourth wagon exchange that I ran over myself with the tractor. Attempting to speed up the process of hooking tractor to wagon, I simply reached forward and nudged the hand clutch slightly to rock the tractor back an inch or two so I could drop the pin into the holes. Unfortunately, the clutch slipped the tractor into reverse and nearly made old Ronny a tire track in the field of life. Thankfully, my father heard my cries and pulled me out from under the big tire which had pinned me against the wagon. Although I was walking without the aid of crutches by December, the cast stunted the growth in my left leg which is now shorter than my right. My slight limp is a constant reminder that sloth can be a deadly sin. **Lesson learned: Don't get lazy or you'll work yourself to death.**

In high school, my older brother pulled some strings and got me a job at Fred's Nursery, his place of employment.

So there I was — back at the nursery I had dreamed of many a hot summer day as a child. Uncle Joe would have been proud. But after slaving in the hot sun planting inpatients and rolling out sod, all the while fighting off mosquitoes the size of small birds and spiders the size of ash trays (I was clearly headed for the sterile environment of a classroom), I cursed my idealism and put aside my childish ways. On the way home after the first day — dirt under my fingernails, knees grass-stained — my brother asked me how I liked the job he got me. I took a long swig from my Coleman's jug, belched and blurted. "It's okay, but I wouldn't want to do it for a living."

Cue my brother's icy glare and the long silence following it before he dropped me off at my house. No longer living at home, he didn't even come in for a free supper. He, of course, had chosen life at the nursery as his living. I, of course, was a 15-year-old cement-head with the sensitivity of a June bug. My brother pulled a few more strings and my job at Fred's Nursery was no more. **Lesson learned: Childhood fantasies are best left in the past and, tell lies to those who do you favors even if you'd rather take a needle in the eye instead.**

When I was studying a Dordt, one of my jobs was to get up at 6:00 a.m. and scrub the toilets and urinals in the Student Union Building. You

can't get much more base than an early morning staring contest with a toilet. I remember lounging with friends on a Sunday evening in the SUB and being distracted by other students entering and leaving the restrooms. I began to resent anyone "resting" too long in there. Scrub the toilet, scour the floor — flush — scrub the toilet, scour the floor.... **Lesson learned: sometimes you've got to get down on your knees to appreciate the job you have today.**

My last summer of employment before selling grammar to teens was spent with a construction worker from the church — leather-skinned, pipe-smoking Art — a former teacher, who left the profession to swing a hammer, something generally not acceptable in our province's high school classrooms. With Art, I learned you never knew what job you'd be facing tomorrow, and from Art I learned it didn't matter. You worked hard and you did your best.

One day, he and I were hired by a farmer to put up slats on which to hang tobacco leaves in a tobacco barn. Art nailed one side of the board; I nailed the other. Then we had to stand on that board, hold the next board in place above our heads and nail it on. Then we had to climb onto that board, hold the next board in place above our heads and nail it on. And so on — to the top of the barn. Never great with the hammer, I thought this job was God's

Opinion/News

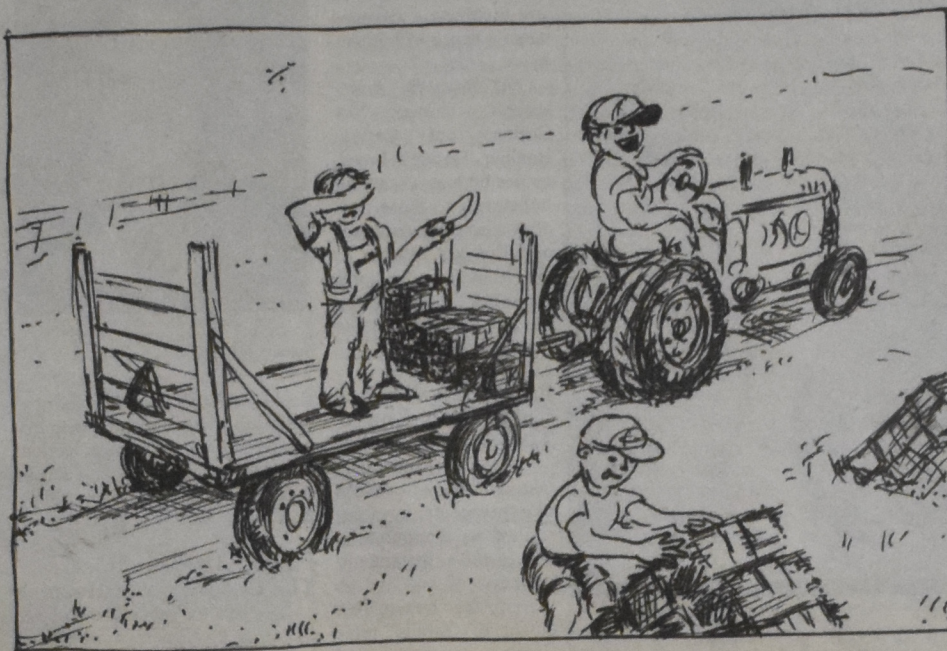
revenge for shoddy work I might have done earlier in the summer.

Art reminded me that tobacco workers for years to come would be standing on these boards, so we'd better do top-notch work. My life literally depended on the quality of my work, which is, I sup-

Work is a word often used in the Scriptures. From a practical point of view, of course, good work is encouraged.

posed, the stake we should all have in our work. **Lesson learned: Others will depend on how we do our work.** So, if you're in sales, place yourself in the position of your customer; if you're in education, place yourself in the classroom desk; if you're a minister, place yourself in the church pew; if you're retired, place yourself in the positions of those in need of your volunteer work.

Work is a word often used in the Scriptures. From a practical point of view, of course, good work is encour-



aged. Paul said in Colossians that "whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men" (3:23). But "work" is often used in the context of the Lord's work on this earth — discipling the lost, gathering the found. In Matthew 9: 37, Jesus tells

his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." He's speaking of the daunting task of bringing unbelievers to the Lord, of course. No corn silage here. You don't need a degree in agriculture from the Aggie College or skilled trade papers, either. Anybody can

be a worker, Jesus says. He was talking to fishermen who gave up their jobs to work for the Lord.

My first principal, Fred Spoelstra, once said people should take pictures of themselves at work every year and pass the pictures on to the next generation as

significantly as family holidays or birthday parties. He's right. People will spend good chunks of their lives in the office or on the construction site and retire with nothing but memories of their work. No pictures. No video footage.

As I sit now reflecting on all those jobs, it's funny how the paycheck — extremely important at the time — is the one thing that fails to register any memory. It is the work and how the work shaped me as a person that I now value. A good friend whose desk sits beside mine in the English office at my school tells his students that if they become surgeons, they should strive to be the best surgeons in the hospital. If they sell automobiles, they should strive to be the best auto salespersons on the showroom floor. If they shovel manure, they should strive to be the best manure shovelers in the barn.

Whether selling dull pencils to your mother or shining toilet bowls, good work — "as working for the Lord" — is the thing. That I've learned.

Church of England permits remarriage for divorced people

Cedric Pulford

LONDON, England (ENI) — The Church of England has voted strongly — and against traditionalist opposition — to allow church weddings for divorcees whose former partner is still living.

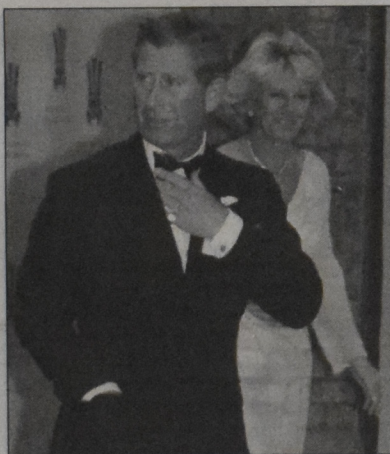
The church's historic ban on such weddings was last reiterated in 1957, although it has often been disregarded by Anglican parish clergy. More than one in six weddings — 11,000 out of 65,000 — in 1999 involved at least one divorced person, a Church of England spokesman told ENI.

Exceptional circumstances

The ruling general synod's decision to allow remarriage in "exceptional" circumstances still leaves clergy free to refuse to marry couples including a divorcee.

The decision raised immediate speculation that this opens the way for the heir to the British throne, Prince Charles, to marry his long-time companion, Camilla Parker Bowles, whose ex-husband is still living.

Archbishop Rowan Williams, who will become archbishop of



Britain's Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles attend a gala dinner in London. A Church of England ruling might allow this couple to be married.

Canterbury in October, supports a church wedding for the couple if they wish it, according to unnamed sources quoted in the British news media.

The church remained committed to life-long marriage, Bishop

Scott-Joynt, bishop of Winchester, insisted.

"We have to [represent] the compassion and the rebuilding love of God to as many as possible of those who are serious and hopeful about embarking freshly on marriage after a divorce," he said.

"As things are we present an uncertain, incoherent picture to those who want to know where the Church of England stands on an issue which sadly touches the lives of many thousands of people, of whom many are already within our churches, and many others are within reach of our service and witness."

A wretched reality

Marriage breakdown was "a wretched reality" for many, Scott-Joynt pointed out.

The measure provides a series of guidelines to allow priests to make up their own minds. A priest

might decline to marry a couple whose relationship caused the breakdown of the previous marriage of one of the partners, as this would be "consecrating an old infidelity". Another ground for refusal might be the marriage causing "hostile public comment or scandal."

Church does not endorse 'serial monogamy'

A person who has been divorced more than once might expect the priest to refuse a third marriage because the church does not wish to endorse "serial monogamy".

Critics of the Church of England's marriage measure claim it will promote "marriage on demand" for divorcees.

Geoffrey Kirk, national secretary of the Anglican traditionalist group Forward in Faith, told ENI: "If a priest says No to a proposed marriage when he has said Yes to others, his criteria become questionable. The safest thing will be to say Yes always."

The general synod also agreed to relax the rule about the location of weddings so that the ceremonies will no longer have to take place in a church.

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Book Review/News

Embracing a relational psychotherapy: Olthuis' 'Beautiful Risk'

Jeff Strong

The publication of Dr. Jim Olthuis' *The Beautiful Risk* (Zondervan, 2001) signals an important movement in the thought of a scholar whose reflections on topics ranging from marriage to post-modern hermeneutics have been stimulating, challenging, and engaging.

Rich tapestry of stories

With *The Beautiful Risk* — the author's first book-length exposition on the topic of psychotherapy — Olthuis offers up a revisionary call to those within the therapeutic enterprise. Drawing from his own clinical experience and those of his clients, Olthuis provides a rich tapestry of therapeutic stories and practical therapeutic insight.

The Beautiful Risk is comprised of three parts entitled Loving and Healing, The Healing Connection, and Healing Spirals, respectively. This review will explore the prominent themes within each section, as well as provide a brief conclusion.

Part 1: Loving and Healing: Towards a Spiritual Psychology

The first section is by far the most theoretical in Olthuis' work. Throughout these pages, Olthuis busies himself with the daunting task of elucidating a "spiritual psychology," an understanding of the therapeutic relationship that (in opposition to many alternative Christian therapeutic models) sees the therapeutic journey as distinctly,



a more authentic space; a space that understands any therapeutic encounter as a dance of mutuality.

The Beautiful Risk's second chapter "Not Curing, but Caring: Healing Through Love" comes both as a scathing indictment to those proposing power-over therapies that are thought to lead to cure, and a warm summons for those seeking a therapeutic process emphasizing care.

Part 2: Healing Connection: Five Therapeutic Keys

The second section of Olthuis' book outlines five therapeutic keys described as integral to a successful therapeutic journey. If one had to identify the "how-to" element of Olthuis' relational psychotherapy, this section would fit the

bill. Chapters 7 (Welcoming and Blessing), 8 (Authenticity), 9 (Safety and Belonging), 10 (Attunement) and 11 (Trusting the Process) take each therapeutic key in turn, and unpack their significance for both therapist (client) and therapist.

In particular, chapter seven's emphasis on blessing as a therapeutic disposition is such a refreshing perspective on the therapist/therapist relationship that any practicing therapist must attend to this chapter without argument. A welcome addition to this section is Olthuis' consistent reminder that perfection within each "key" is both unnecessary and impossible. Therapy is a dance (one of many helpful metaphors within *The*



BERT WITVOET

James Olthuis

Beautiful Risk with few (if any) pre-established steps; a dance that entails setbacks and imperfections that bestow the therapeutic relationship with its own unique rhythm and energy.

Part 3: Healing Spirals: The Geography of Healing

The concluding chapters of *The Beautiful Risk* put forward a spiral model of healing. Beginning with the first stage (letting-in) and proceeding with the subsequent three (letting-go, letting-out, letting-transform), the author elucidates a general framework from which to understand the healing process. However, Olthuis is careful throughout to remind us that all that is being offered is a general geography of healing. The author notes:

"Our individual uniqueness and particular circumstances make every therapeutic voyage unpredictable. Each voyage needs to find its own way, makes its own reckonings, plot its own tacks, gather its own rhythms and routines. At the same time, paradoxically, it is the same ocean we all sail on — a sea with recognizable patterns, characteristic obstacles, and charted perils. It's not that we know how we will react when we encounter these challenges, but at least we have a map that lets us know something of what lies ahead." (p. 161)

Towards a relational spirituality

I must admit that upon my initial reading of *The Beautiful Risk*, the depth of Olthuis' thought eluded me. After having read numerous books on the topic of Christian counseling, soul care, psychotherapy, etc., powerful concepts such as love, care, compassion, empathy (and so forth) tend to lose some of their existential steam. It became easy for me to dismiss *The Beautiful Risk* as just another book on a familiar topic. However, after a conversation with a friend who had also read Jim's book (in a much

more intelligent manner than my initial read), I was challenged to re-read Jim's ideas and open myself up to their deeper implications. It was during this process that the power and beauty of Jim's thought was loosed within me.

Alternative understanding

The Beautiful Risk is indeed much more than "just another book" on the topic of how to do therapy "Christianly." Instead, it is an invitation to understand the therapeutic journey in an alternative way; indeed, an invitation to understand ourselves and our spirituality in an alternative way.

Within Olthuis' model, therapy becomes more than a program for cure (as if that were possible). Instead, therapy is understood and experienced as a sacred space where healing emerges — but only through a disposition of care. The rich relational context of therapy (whether conducted professionally or otherwise) provides us with the only avenue through which the facilitation of deep, resonant healing can surface.

At its heart, relational psychotherapy holds to the conviction that it is within the connections of therapy (the dance) that spaces open up which allow God's Spirit to initiate healing.

More significantly, however, is the fact that Olthuis' effort does much more than open up for us new ways of discussing the therapeutic journey. On a much deeper level *The Beautiful Risk* is a call to each of us — therapist or teacher, friend or parent — to embrace a relational spirituality that honors the space between as a sacred space where love engages, heals and transforms us.

The Beautiful Risk is a masterful work, and one that will no doubt inspire subsequent articles and books by gifted authors seeking to unpack the rich treasures hidden within its pages. In the end, Olthuis' "relational psychotherapy" is much more than a different way of doing therapy — it is a different way of being. It is a different way of loving, caring, and blessing. It becomes a model of therapy that can be practiced by any of us, for all of us can/are love. It becomes a model of therapy for all of us, for we all desire/need care. And ultimately, it becomes a model of spirituality that embraces each of us, for we are all made for/by the God of Love.

Jeff Strong is currently completing a Masters of Worldview Studies (M.W.S.) degree at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto, and is enrolled to begin a Masters of Theological Studies degree at McMaster University in Hamilton this fall.

CRWRC provides hope at disaster sites

(Religion Today) — From typhoons and drought to floods, recent natural disasters have left thousands of Americans wondering where they can go for help. Volunteers and staff from the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) are answering that call by providing hope at disaster sites across the U.S.

Texas: A week of heavy rainfall in the San Antonio area has caused extensive flooding in 20 Texas counties. Recent estimates indicate that 12 people have died and more than 48,000 homes have been damaged or destroyed. C.H. VanDyke, regional manager for CRWRC's Disaster Response Services, has

been in regular contact with Texas voluntary organizations and emergency management officials to assess the immediate and long-term needs of affected communities. VanDyke expects CRWRC to be involved in needs assessment and home reconstruction during long-term recovery.

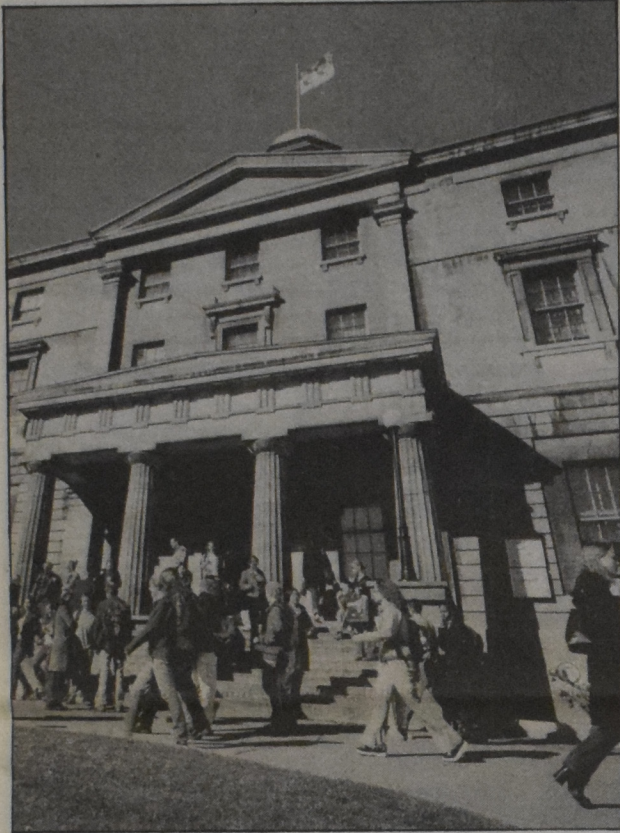
New Mexico: Drought conditions are prevalent in many parts of New Mexico. The abnormally dry season has stunted crops and left farmers with insufficient food for their animals. CRWRC has ongoing community development programs among the Navajo people in New Mexico. As part of these programs, Mitzie Begay, CRWRC

New Mexico staff, has been working with Navajo community groups to develop an appropriate response to the drought situation. So far, community chapters on the Navajo reservation have used emergency funds to purchase some feed, but those funds are depleting and the need for hay continues. As a next step, CRWRC will be collecting donations of hay from farmers across the country and transporting it to New Mexico.

Those who can donate or transport hay are asked to contact Begay by e-mail at mbegay@crwrc.org, phone at 505-371-5832 or fax at 505-371-5330.

Education/Sports

Survey shows college students being taught there is no absolute right or wrong



PIERRE-PAUL POULIN/MAGMA

"In light of the Enron and other recent business scandals, the poll was intended to analyze the kind of ethical education our college and universities are providing. The results are dismaying," says Zogby International.

PRINCETON, N.J. (EP) — Nearly 75 per cent of seniors in U.S. colleges said that their professors taught them that there are no absolute standards for right and wrong behavior, according to a survey commissioned by the National Association of Scholars (NAS), a higher-education reform group located in Princeton, N.J.

The survey, conducted by the firm Zogby International, found that three out of four college seniors said their professors taught them that right and wrong depend "on differences in individual values and cultural diversity." Only 25 per cent said their professors taught that "there are clear and uniform standards of right and wrong by which every one should be judged."

Dismaying results

Additionally, three out of four seniors said they were taught that it is more important for a corporation to pursue progressive social policies than it was to provide accurate business reports to stockholders and creditors — a marked depart-

ure from a past emphasis on honesty in business dealings.

NAS explained its purpose in conducting the survey, in which Zogby contacted 401 randomly selected college seniors, "In light of the Enron and other recent business scandals, the poll was intended to analyze the kind of ethical education our college and universities are providing. The results are dismaying."

According to the survey, 38 per cent of the seniors felt that, based on what they were taught in college, "recruiting a diverse workforce in which women and minorities are advanced and promoted" was a top priority in business, compared to 23 per cent who said that "providing clear and accurate business statements to stockholders and creditors" was most important.

Another 18 per cent said that "minimizing environmental pollution by adopting the latest anti-pollution technology and complying with government regulations" would be their top business priority, and another 18 per cent

Small talk

We did nothing wrong. I promise. It was our third day in Illinois. Monica and I were just driving along the road going the speed limit. We signaled when we needed to. No offensive bumper stickers. Just our British Columbia license plates.

Suddenly a guy in a pickup drives up next to us and yells, "Hey, Columbia! Get outta Illinois!" He takes off. Now what this guy lacked in geographical and social intellect, he definitely made up for in enthusiasm. A welcome wagon of sorts. Our introduction to our new life in Illinois.

Luckily, since then we've found Illinois to be quite the opposite of that guy. People have been pretty good to us.

I've been in graduate school here for about two months now and there's a particular course I need to tell you about — one as far removed from reality as you can get. We spend 110 minutes of each day discussing theories about writing. Feminism, post-colonialism, gay theory — you know, standard fare. Interesting, especially since 80 per cent of everything that's said runs counter to what I believe. The Dutch CRC boy having someone tell him that Christianity is like a guy who spends his life fishing in a lake that has no fish in it. It's overwhelming sometimes. I do my best to speak up, though.

Injecting some reality and humor

But I've found a way to inject a little bit of reality and humor into the enterprise. I talk about sports.

You start talking about sports in a graduate English course? You bumbling, un-intellectual idiot! Maybe I am, but it works. My theme every day is, of course, Canada's defeat of the United States in men's and women's Olympic hockey. I slip it in anywhere, but I make sure that it comes up once each class. Things might go something like this:

Professor: In post-structuralist theory, can you really say that any party involved in the writing enterprise has authority?

Sue: Yes, I think that in most cases the creator of the rhetoric has agency.

Tim: I agree. You know, I feel that it's very

said it was most important to avoid "layoffs by not exporting jobs or moving plants from one area to another."

While 43 per cent of business and accounting majors said they were taught that providing accurate reports to creditors and stockholders was a priority, a majority of these (56 per cent) still preferred one of the other three alternatives.

'Anything goes' attitude

Based on their college experience, 28 per cent of the students said business was the profession where an "anything goes attitude" was important to one's success in the field. By contrast, 20 per cent said an "anything goes" attitude was important to success in the journalism profession, and 16 per cent said such an attitude was crucial for success in the field of education. Only five per cent held that

attitude about science/medicine and the civil service field, three per cent held that view for the religion profession, and two per cent for a military career.

Perpetuating ethical laxness

Stephen Balch, president of the NAS, said that the survey's results "suggest that our colleges and universities, however unwittingly, are contributing to, and perpetuating, the ethical laxness behind the

After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides



similar to the agency that the Canadian Olympic hockey teams had when they destroyed the U.S... (a couple giggles break out, one of them mine)

The next day's class might sound like this:

Mike: I'm not sure what to make of the idea of writing as social construction.

Professor: Good question, Mike. What do you folks think?

Tim: Writing is decisive social construction in much the same way that the Canadian Olympic hockey teams caused decisive American destruction. (some smiles, and one chuckle)

I find that the class enjoys it for the most part. They don't even mind hearing about their country's loss. Because it's just sports.

You see, in sports you can have extremely opinionated, biased feelings and it's OK. Nobody's going to hate you for having irrational, illogical passions about what you believe. Though I do remember visiting a friend in Michigan and watching his dad storm out of the room because his son thought the Chicago Bulls were better than the Detroit Pistons. He actually did.

I talk a lot about how sports events illustrate aspects of our culture and faith, and I'll continue to do so. But sports also provide another valuable function. They give us something completely meaningless and inconsequential to argue about.

Debate and criticism are incredibly important in being Christian witnesses in a "God is Dead" world, but sometimes it's refreshing to have a break from constant, ideological disagreement.

Gotta go. I'm late for class and I still need to think of some material....



Tim Antonides teaches Grade 8 and is a basketball coach at Surrey Christian School in Surrey, B.C.

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Opinion

Mixing the sexes may not be good in some cases, marriage excepted



CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

Some argue that boys' brains are just wired differently from girls, so they learn differently and need to be taught differently.

Harry der Nederlanden

Some 20 - 25 years ago one of the hot topics among educators was bringing girls' performance in math and science up to the level of boys. Most were convinced that this had nothing to do with native talent (genetics) but with how the courses were taught. To change that, many schools set up separate classes for girls in these subjects, and girls have indeed managed to close the gap.

Recent tests, however, now show boys falling further and further behind girls in reading. This is true not just in Canadian and American schools but in all 32 countries that participated in the test. The test was administered to 30,000 15-year-olds across Canada. Thanks to the girls, Canada ranks second in the world in reading, surpassed only by Finland. However, the average Canadian boy ranked 30 points behind the average Canadian girl. Alberta girls scored highest, outscoring their male counterparts by 38 points.

Another research project in Newfoundland revealed that in high school 75 per cent more girls make it on the honors list than boys and 15 per cent more girls graduate from high school. In Edmonton, 83 per cent of those expelled from school are boys.

All sorts of research, speculation

This gender gap is spurring all sorts of research and speculation into the reasons for it. Some suggest it is due to the kind of material schools provide for reading. Much of this is more appealing to girls than to boys, who seem to prefer more factual stuff rather than fiction and poetry. (Oh-oh, English teachers, I can already see the day when automobile repair manuals will displace Keats' *Ode to the West Wind* in boys' readers.) Some

blame the sexism of the tests themselves, suggesting they are just more oriented to girls, the way I.Q. tests are more friendly to whites. Others argue that boys' brains are just wired differently from girls, so they learn differently and need to be taught differently. As usual in educational faculties, this is, of course, spawning an entire industry.

Blame it on the weather

By the way, has anyone looked into the influence of the weather? Alberta winters resemble Finland winters in many respects. Frigid evenings girls curl up with a book while the boys are out on the hockey rink knocking one another's brain out. Surveys do show that girls spend more time reading for pleasure than do boys.

The graph-makers among the educators, assuming no doubt that the gap will continue to widen at present rates, project a time when girls will read like geniuses and boys be rendered wholly illiterate. An official in the education department called on educators to develop strategies to quickly reverse the trend before boys lose the ability to read instructions on blueprints and information provided by computers. Then they will be less productive and will cost Canadian society millions. He seemed to forget that, although Canadian boys scored behind Canadian girls, they were still among the top readers in the world.

In spite of special efforts to bring girls up to par, boys continue to outscore girls in math, though by a smaller margin than 20 years ago. And girls have overtaken boys in science in most provinces.

Single-sex empowerment

At a conference held this summer on educating boys, experts discussed setting up single-sex empowerment programs for boys

similar to those set up for girls 20 years ago. In the U.S., several schools have already begun such programs and others are studying the possibility. Most begin at the junior high level but some begin to separate the sexes already in grade school. Many parents are convinced that girls are a distraction to boys. (Undoubtedly so, but isn't this also true the other way around? Do girls score higher because they are less distracted? Ha!)

In Albany, N.Y., a public grade school offers single-sex education in all subjects, but both sexes are

taught in the same building so they still get to mingle on the playground. One such school in California has been operational for three years already and is bragging about the results. They've developed special teaching strategies for boys that seek to channel their excess energy, following three to four minutes of instruction with 20 to 25 minutes of hands-on work and then three to four minutes of wrap-up. In other respects the curriculum taught to boys and girls is the same.

In Kansas City, research by Michael Gurian, who has written three

books about genetically based differences between the sexes, found that boys-only teaching works best if it allows more movement, more work in pairs and uses storytelling and story-making.

The Edmonton Public School Board is considering such a program and the Toronto Catholic School Board is launching single-sex classes in English at one of its high schools this fall.

Gender differences also come into play in suicide rates among adolescents. Although many more

Continued on page 17...

Loving our neighbor as ourselves

Building Trust

Vicky Van Andel Ed.



Vicky Van Andel

In the novel *Mercy Among the Children*, author David Richards tells the story of a man named Lyle who in a critical time in his life bargains with God. If God helps him survive he will never again harm another person. He gets through his ordeal and commits to his vow with a passion to the extreme. That is, he becomes passive. When others hurt him, he refuses to speak up to defend himself. When he is challenged in what he believes, he never stands up for his beliefs. He tells himself that people cannot hurt him without also hurting themselves. God will be the judge, and ultimately God knows what lives in our hearts. As a result, Lyle suffers at the hands of others and so do his family members. They alienate themselves from him.

Choosing to be passive or active

When I read this book, I was reminded of the struggle of women in a patriarchal society. This is not as far fetched a connection as it may seem. Lyle believes that God will provide, because God knows our hearts and our motives. He therefore chooses not to act in unjust situations. Women have to make choices in the unjust situations they find themselves in. They can choose to be passive, fearing they will hurt others if they speak up. Or they can be actively busy try to effect change.

Of course this story really tells us something about our broken human nature. If we don't take care of ourselves, other people won't either. In fact, the opposite happens and they may hurt us. It is one of the hard lessons of life that takes a long time to learn and accept.

The commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves is difficult to live up to. Loving our neighbor may seem easy but what does it really mean? What is the connection between loving ourselves and loving our neighbor? It lies in the reality that we cannot love our neighbor unless we love ourselves first. Are we able to love ourselves? Do we love ourselves at all? How do we deal with our fear of selfishness? Do we love all of ourselves, our whole body, soul and mind? And are we able to do it completely, in spite of our many failings, painful memories or past misdeeds? This is a complicated commandment. It means learning to truly know and trust that we are redeemed by the blood of

Christ, and learning to live out of that deeply spiritual knowing. It leads us into a life of gratitude and joy. I see Mother Teresa as an example of someone who learned to understand this commandment.

We need to look at how we love

We cannot give unto others that which we cannot give to ourselves. And so we spend our lifetime working through this commandment. That is what it is there for: to keep working on it and to find a balanced approach to loving in our relationships. When relationships are balanced we are free to express who we are, we feel whole and can freely give of that wholeness to other people. Hurt in relationships indicates a lack of balance. We may be loving too much or not enough, both ourselves or other people. It is an indication we need to look at how we love.

We know that patriarchy has resulted in an imbalance of power between the genders. There are many other imbalances in our society of course, including poverty, racial inequities, and political and social oppression.

We have a choice in how we respond to injustice. We can respond passively or actively. If we are afraid to hurt others in our efforts to oppose injustice we are passive. We will do nothing because we are afraid. Injustice and suffering will continue. If we choose to be active we may hurt some people, but we may be able to change something.

We must choose to actively participate in striving for justice, and do that in all areas of life. This takes courage and perseverance. It also takes patience. We have to hang on until the very end. In the process we need to take care of each other. Our search within ourselves for inner wholeness and our ability to love ourselves will help us reflect that love to other people. We are made in God's image and we may claim that.

Vicky Van Andel is the editor of this column. Anyone who would like to contribute to this column is invited to contact her via fax at: 1-780-473-0970, or by e-mail at: vanandel@oanet.com

Frustration with oil barons and Mugabe in Africa

Harry der Nederlanden

Nigerian 'mamas' seize huge oil terminal

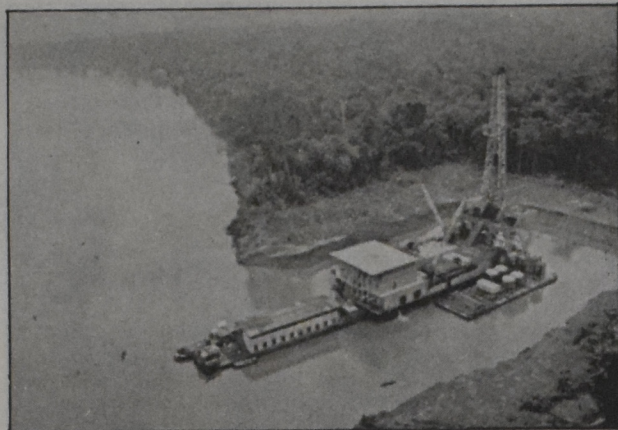
ESCRAVOS, Nigeria — Led by a core of 50 to 60-year-old "mamas", a large group of Nigerian women stormed and occupied oil terminals owned by Chevron Texaco to demand jobs, schools and local investments from the company.

The protest began with about 200 women seizing the main pumping station on Escravos Island on the Nigerian coast and spread as women from other tribes and villages began occupying feeder stations.

The Escravos facility is located in a swamp 300 km east of Lagos and exports 450,000 barrels of crude a day. It employs more than 700 workers, but many of them are from abroad — from Canada, the U.S. and Britain.

The women came equipped for a long siege, carrying straw mats, food and cooking utensils. They were not demanding anything unreasonable — jobs for their sons, electricity for their villages and basic education for their children. They threatened to strip themselves naked if opposed, a powerful shaming gesture in this traditional country.

Most Nigerians live off \$1 a day and, despite its oil wealth, the Niger delta is one of the poorest areas in the country. The people are aware that the black stuff being pumped out from under their feet is bringing untold wealth. To someone else. They see little or nothing of it. The impoverished fishing vil-



A drilling platform sinks an oil well into the Niger Delta in Nigeria.

lages with their rusty tin shacks contrast sharply with the modernity of the compound where the oil workers live, which has paved streets, electric lighting, air conditioning, swimming pools and all the amenities of the West.

In 1998 armed young men seized the Escravos depot and threatened to blow it up. Last year a protest by local men was broken up with tear gas and whips. Recently local gangs have been extorting money from the oil company by kidnapping workers and demanding ransom.

This time the police were under strict orders to avoid violence against the unarmed women.

After 10 days of negotiations, the women left peacefully with promises from the company that their villages would be modernized.

And things were back to normal for the international oil company. Or maybe not.

Zimbabweans become increasingly desperate under Mugabe regime

ZIMBABWE — In Zimbabwe, conditions continue to deteriorate under Robert Mugabe's anarchic rule. As the economy bottoms out, children are ditching school to go out begging. *The Daily News* reports that a new breed of streeturchins has appeared in Zimbabwe's major cities — very young children accompanied by their haggard mothers. They leap out at cars at every intersection when traffic stops, begging for food, empty bottles, coins. Street gangs occupy almost every parking lot, demanding small fees to guard cars.

Political violence has displaced

tens of thousands of workers from formerly prosperous commercial farms. Large numbers of those who once invaded these farms are now in turn being evicted by the new owners, many of whom are Mugabe's cronies.

The number of AIDS orphans is estimated to be one million or more. Because they wander about, they are hard to enumerate.

An article, written by a reporter from Zimbabwe, is a cry of anguish:

"The true story of the impact of hunger, HIV/Aids and social instability remains untold. Families and individuals have all been thrown into a jitterbug of misery, into a climate of fear, silence and bewilderment because of the drought and the unending political crisis.

"A serious paucity of vision, covered by an obsession to destroy reason and force loyalty to Zanu PF [Mugabe's party], has clouded debate on Zimbabwe's fate. No one cares anymore about the toddlers in the street.

"The sheer weight of the public responsibilities facing the government is so much that President Mugabe and his government alone no longer have the energy to lift a finger. The social welfare system has collapsed and no one is talking about it.

"Those who must show leadership and rekindle discussion watch helplessly as the government equates open debates to treason and regards critics as traitors....

"We are burying thousands weekly, families are breaking up, there are no jobs, people are bullied

and assaulted daily and the economic crisis are deepening.

"An entire generation of parents faces the risk of being wiped out by AIDS and, despite Mugabe's election promise, there are no retroviral drugs in public hospitals.

"The signs of starvation are all over: join a food queue and look into people's sinking eyes, feel their lifeless hands, or check their swollen bellies and you know a serious phase is on its way. Food prices, despite the so-called price controls, continue to rise."

Fear of whispering dissent

"But there are no public forums at which these matters are debated and unpacked; there are no open expressions of anger; there is no visible movement against the severity of the blows on our very existence. There is fear even to whisper a dissenting tune.

"The government is getting away with a notion and definition of the opposition as a foreign-inspired concept which deserves nothing but hate, not as a partner. Foreigners, especially the British, are seen as the main enemy using a willing coterie of traitors and avaricious puppets, not the glaring reality of bad governance and shoddy economic experiments."

Mugabe's latest reaction has been to blame food shortages on international companies and threatening to seize them the way he did the large farms.

He continued his eviction of white farmers, calling them "unrepentant racists and fascists."

See WOMEN page 18...

Mixing the sexes may not be good in some cases, marriage excepted

... continued from page 16

teenage boys than girls kill themselves in Canada, many more girls make the attempt. Boys have a higher success rate because they choose more violent methods — hanging or shooting as opposed to pills.

Gender conflict problems

However, a study by a psychiatrist noted that when questioned after suicide attempts, a large segment of the girls said that "gender conflict" problems were prominent among the causes. This is the name given by the psychiatrist to conflicting pressures exerted on young women because of their sex, such as fighting with parents about their right to date or about career plans. But the pressures don't always come from the parents but from society (relative to their looks) or from peers (relative to be-

coming sexually active).

Girls were more than 10 times more likely to mention such pressures than boys. They complained about having traditional roles thrust upon them and that the interests of brothers were taken more seriously than their own. The psychiatrist took this as proof that our society still does not present boys and girls with the same freedom of choice. "Many of the girls feel limited by, and conflicted about, their gender roles," he said.

Inflated expectations

Might inflated expectations also play a role? Young women have been subjected to a "you-can-be-anything-you-want-to-be" ideology in an effort to bring them up to par with males. That's unrealistic for either sex, but it may be putting more pressure on young women.

People who live out more

traditional gender roles, research shows, are healthier and live longer. Those who defy tradition, on the other hand, increase their risk of heart disease. Househusbands, for example, have a 82 per cent higher death rate than male breadwinners working outside the home. (Maybe they just didn't learn to navigate the hazards of the home as well as housewives. The home can be a dangerous place — especially when there are children about. Men are just not as child-resistant as women.)

The study also found that men earning less than \$10,000 per year were twice as likely to die as men making more than \$50,000 per year. That surprises me. If you earn less than \$10,000 per year, you're sure to starve to death or get shot for stealing food. I'd have thought you were perhaps two hundred times as likely to die, that is, if it

wasn't for the fact that I read somewhere that everyone has the same chance of dying — and that's 100 per cent.

Men in prestigious occupations, such as doctors and lawyers, had a much lower incidence of heart disease and were much less likely to die early. The researchers speculated that those who adopted traditionally female roles probably received less recognition and social rewards and so withered away early. The study did not seem to entertain the fact that rich men get better health care and more time to go golfing.

Insidious sexist stereotypes

Women who stepped into prestigious occupations traditionally held by men, however, did not fare so well. They were three times more likely to develop heart disease than other women.

Researchers wondered whether there were insidious sexist stereotypes operating below the surface that subverted the health of ambitious women. Or perhaps, they suggested, the stress of trying to balance work and home is greater for women.

Maybe it's the stress of trying to stay ahead of all those men in hot pursuit. And the lack of time for golf. Those big-shot executive types just don't like to play with women. Losing would be sure to bring on a heart attack.

Oh, yes, here's the "marriage excepted" part of my headline. Men who were widowed, divorced, or separated were twice as likely as married men to die of heart disease. That's no great mystery either. If I had to live off my own cooking...

News Survey

Women repressed in Arab countries

... continued from page 17

Journalists critical of his regime are being arrested under a new media law passed shortly before his re-election. A dozen have already been arrested.

Zimbabwe's unemployment rate is 70 per cent, inflation 113 per cent. The U.N. estimates that in this once prosperous country nearly half of the people need food aid. There have been charges, however, that Mugabe's party has been using food donations to reward supporters and punish opponents, requiring people to show party membership cards to receive rations.

U.N report seeks causes of Arab stagnation

NEW YORK, N.Y. — A survey of 22 Arab countries, the Arab Human Development Report 2002, commissioned by the United Nations warns that Arab societies are being crippled by a lack of political freedom, the repression of women and an isolation from the world of ideas that stifles creativity.

Barbara Crosette summarizes: "The report notes that while oil income has transformed the landscapes of some Arab countries, the region remains 'richer than it is developed.' Per capita income growth has shrunk in the last 20 years to a level just above that of sub-Saharan Africa. Productivity is declining. Research and development are weak.... Science and technology are dormant.

"Intellectuals flee a stultifying — if not repressive — political and social environment, it says. Arab women, the report found, are almost universally denied advancement. Half of them still cannot read or write. The maternal mortality rate is double that of Latin America and four times that of East Asia...."

The combined gross domestic



A contrast between traditional and modern Arab women: at left, Egyptian women wash corn at a well. Right: Two female students at Egypt's Cairo University.

product of the 22 Arab countries is less than a medium-sized European country, such as Spain, a *National Post* report points out.

The report blames Arab leaders for squandering oil revenues, tolerating corruption and being obsessed with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict while ignoring their own people.

Half the young people polled for the report said they want to emigrate because there is so little opportunity in their home countries.

"Sadly, the Arab world is largely depriving itself of the creativity and productivity of half its citizens," the report concluded. The report was written by a team of nearly 30 authorities in various fields overseen by an advisory

team of well-known Arabs.

Ms. Khalaf Hunaidi, 49, a former deputy prime minister of Jordan who led its economic policy team, said that she asked the authors "to come and look at this problem and decide: Why is Arab culture, why are Arab countries lagging behind?"

"It's not outsiders looking at Arab countries," she said. "It's Arabs deciding for themselves."

The Arab intellectuals do not fault others for what they see as the "deficits" in contemporary Arab culture.

For example, the report describes a "severe shortage" of new writing and a dearth of translations of works from outside: "The whole Arab world [comprising 280 million people in the 22 countries] translates about 330 books annually, one-fifth the number that Greece translates."

Books are not being translated, in part because of Islamic pressures, said Ms. Abou-Saif, a Coptic Christian who now lives in the United States.

"There is a pervasive sense that life in the Arab world is repressed by both the state and religious vigilantes," testified another Arab intellectual.

Arab countries need to promote equality

"We say that the Palestinians should be able to determine their own future," said Hunaidi. "But we also say that the rest of the Arab countries have to start promoting democracy and equality for all."

"What can we learn from this

newly honest Arab self-appraisal?" asks Victor Davis Hanson, writing in the *National Post*. "We should put no more credence in the preposterous 'post-colonial' theories that ad nauseam argue that Westerners are still to be blamed a half-century after the last Europeans vacated the Middle East. Post-Marxist analyses that claim international conglomerates stifle the Arab world are just as silly.

"Nor must we believe that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or America's support for Israel is the problem.

"Instead, the simple fact is that hundreds of millions of people are going backward in time in an age when global communications hourly remind them of their dismal futures. Frustration, pride, anger, envy, humiliation, spiritual helplessness — all the classical exegeses for war and conflict — far better explain the Arab world's hostility toward a prosperous, confident and free West."

Russian government increases restrictions on religious freedom

RUSSIA — Over the past several months the Russian Orthodox Church has vehemently and repeatedly objected to moves by the Roman Catholic Church that it calls "proselytism," or seeking to make converts among its people. Recently the Russian government has entered into the fray by denying visas to Catholic clergy. Protestant missionaries have long been harassed in this way.

Some speculate that Russian

President Putin is catering to Russian nationalists, who see Roman Catholicism as a foreign intrusion in Russia.

Catholic officials replied to the proselytism charge by saying that the Church's missionary activity is not directed at Orthodox faithful but at those who are ignorant of the Gospel; however, the Orthodox Church has in effect claimed all Russians as somehow under the sphere of influence of Orthodoxy. It is because of the Orthodox Church that, despite years of Soviet persecution, there is still a general interest in the faith, even among those who do not profess to be believers.

"Western missionaries take advantage of the soil we have made fertile," said Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad.

To prove that the Catholic Church has ambitions to expand, in an open letter the Orthodox Church points to the presence of religious communities in Russia, such as the Dominicans, Jesuits, Holy Family missionaries, and Sons of Divine Providence.

"In today's Russia, the number of Catholics is such that it does not warrant the presence of so many communities," said Kirill.

Even Mother Teresa criticized

The letter even attacks Mother Teresa of Calcutta's Missionaries of Charity. "The word missionaries appears in their name," it says. "In their house in Moscow, they take children off the streets and direct them to Catholicism."

Russia's 1993 constitution clearly states that all religious associations are equal under the law and that both citizens and non-citizens on Russian soil have full religious freedom. However, recent developments prompt Keston News to ask whether the government isn't moving toward increasingly restricting religious freedom.

The first draft of a new law on religion would give non-traditional religions, which include all Protestant churches and perhaps the Roman Catholic Church as well, a secondary status in the country. Traditional religious organizations would be granted extensive opportunities for work in the public spheres of education, the media and social services. A "traditional religious organization" is defined as one that has been active in Russia for no fewer than 50 years and with no fewer than one million believers or followers and which is "an inalienable part of the historical, spiritual and cultural heritage of the peoples of Russia."

Nigerian Christians around Jos flee Muslim attackers

JOS, Nigeria — According to a press release from Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), Christians living in the area around Jos, a predominantly Christian area, have been under attack from militant Muslims. In a small town outside of Jos, Christians on the way to church were ambushed, leaving four dead and 20 injured. Several churches were burned to the ground in other villages and crops destroyed as Christians fled to Jos for safety.

Bishop Ben Kwashi of Jos said: "We are facing a new Muslim onslaught. Terror has been released

on the majority Christian population of the Plateau. As in Sudan, the church in these areas continues to be lively and fervent in faith in spite of their hardships. Our faith in our suffering is producing much fruit. Even now the congregations that are barely a month old are still zealous for Christ. We are losing material possessions and hanging on to Jesus alone."

CSW called on the Nigerian government to intervene with sufficient security forces to end the attacks, and on local Muslim leaders to oppose extremists from outside the region.

News Comment

Nose for News



Bert Hielema

I HAVE A BOOK CALLED *The March of Folly* in which Barbara Tuchman describes the crazy acts committed by governments throughout history, from Troy and the Trojan Horse 3,000 years ago, to Vietnam in our time, when mighty America was defeated by a pack of peasants in the jungle. Today I have the sneaking suspicion that the U.S. of A. — nay, the whole world — is again busy digging not one, but two holes into which it will fall. The holes? Iraq and the Environment.

According to an article in the July 8 issue of *Fortune*, an invasion into Iraq is not a question of *if* but *when*. "Operation Desert Storm" under Papa Bush had a rather wimpy ending: although the roads to Baghdad were open, and most of Saddam's forces slaughtered, at the urging of its closest ally, Saudi Arabia, the President refrained from capturing and killing Mr. Hussein.

WHY WOULD BUSH want to wade into this wasps nest now? I think there are three reasons.

"This time around," so says the son, "I will not listen to these oil sheiks, and once and for all eradicate the Great Satan of the East, with his possible Weapons of Mass Destruction." Afghanistan proved to be a breeze: with the help of the Northern Alliance already fighting the Taliban, it didn't take a lot to scatter the 50,000 lightly-armed bin Laden militia. The strongest army in the world believes that success breeds success, so the Pentagon is gung-ho to invade Iraq, the ancient Mesopotamia, where the rivers Tigris and Euphrates of Paradise fame are located as well as the old city with the notorious name of Babylon and its Babel Tower, more notorious than the leaning one of Pisa. It's the country where the Jews suffered in exile for 70 years, where the feast of Purim originates, when Esther, as wife of the emperor prevented the extermination of the Sons (and daughters) of Jacob. Young Bush wants to finish what the old Bush left undone.

Then there is oil. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia, its main supplier, are

on a collision course. Iraq happens to have the second largest reserves in the world. Without that sticky stuff, we all freeze in the dark or broil in the heat. Bush is from Texas and has oil in his veins, so no wonder he comes through as crude. Both he and his vice-president made their fortune on that black gold. Saudi Arabia now has become unstable, and if it collapses, gone is the security which gives America its pre-eminence. However, power over Iraq's huge resources will keep our SUVs roaring, in a world increasingly desperate for secure access to petroleum products, polluting though it is. Also, if America controls the tap, both Iran and Saudi Arabia are over a barrel.

THERE ALSO IS another reason, a religious one. The *Left Behind* books, the all-time best-selling series with millions sold — almost as popular as McDonald burgers — base their story line on Revelation, the Bible book that so fascinates Christians that *Time Magazine*, in its July 1 issue, featured a big cross on its cover, inscribed with "The Bible & the Apocalypse. Why more people are reading and talking about the end of the world." Both the authors and the readers of these popularized prophecies twist the Scriptures to explain current events and believe, e.g., that the 9/11 disaster is predicted there. Although the first Gulf War did not prove to be End of the World, they expect that this time it will happen, because in Revelation Babylon — and by implication, Iraq in which it is located — is called "the Mother of Whores and of earth's abominations".

I believe that Bush and his supporters are influenced by this thinking, as was Reagan in his time. James Watt, his secretary of the Interior — our equivalent of the Federal Minister of the Environment — was so convinced that the End would come soon, that he didn't want moneys spent on improving the environment. Bush, by his actions, portrays that same mentality.

Why is an excursion into Iraq a

"March of Folly"? The U.S.A. already has a large budget deficit, made worse by the stock market collapse. Gulf War I was paid for by Japan and the Saudis. This time the U.S. must foot the entire bill. That will put pressure on the dollar, already in a weak position. When Iraq left Kuwait, it put the torch to some 500 oil wells. When Saddam bites the dust — a foregone conclusion — he will go out with an even bigger bang, thousands of wells may go up in flames, the price of oil will boom and bust our economy. As a last hurrah, he may throw gas or poison at Israel, and with Sharon in command, the prospect of an atomic retaliation is not excluded.

THE END OF THE world? Millions claim that the clock is ticking. Then there is the other hole. You know how much \$8 trillion is? That is an eight with 12 zeros, or eight million millions, enough to make every Canadian family a millionaire. That's also how much the stock market has lost in the North America alone, in the sinking spell since shares started sliding in the Spring of the year 2000. I did some simple calculations: there are 300 million Americans, or some 80 million households. Half, 40 million, have money riding on that Great Casino we also call Wall- and Bay Street, mainly through pension plans and mutual funds, for a loss of \$200,000 each. Stocks lately have eerily resembled a giant lottery system, where millions pay in big bucks but only a few get rich. *Time Magazine*, July 29, listed seven executives whose companies lost billions — of your money if you had stocks — but came out ahead with jackpots larger than any 649 ever had.

Somehow these huge direct losses will affect us. Of course. What would you do if, rather suddenly, your retirement account or your kids' education fund was reduced by 40 per cent? Pull out?

Those who have looked at the history of stock market since 1945 say that the bottom has not yet been reached. Here's why. Our stocks are valued on a price/earnings (p/e) ratio — share prices divided by earnings per share. Since the end of World War II, the average p/e has been 15; it still stands at 30+. Thus the trend is down, way down.

Others have looked at market losses and discovered that for every \$1.00 change in stock-market wealth, consumers adjust their spending by about five cents. The tremendous devaluations lately mean that hundreds of billions of

dollars will not be used to buy cars or clothes or theatre tickets or restaurant meals.

We now see something we haven't seen since the 1930s: deflation, the reason why lower and lower interest rates have had no effect. Look at Japan, where interest rates approach zero, and where the Nikkei Index since 1992 has hovered around 10,000, down from 42,000. People don't buy because prices are dropping: why spend today when it costs less tomorrow?

IT IS QUITE WELL possible, given our child-like behavior (the U.S. personal debt amounts to 75 per cent of Gross Domestic Product, the highest ever) that yesterday's foolish optimism becomes tomorrow's equally foolish pessimism. In the past five years we've seen a wild economy: high stock prices caused high consumption, unemployment dropped, tax revenues jumped — Bush engineered a tax cut based on these unrealistic projections insuring deficits for years to come — and the rest of the world, Canada especially, was happy to export its wares to the U.S.A. We now see the opposite, depressing for more than moods alone. Market deflation means weak consumer spending, poor profits, low investments and reduced tax revenues.

Where are we headed? That is the trillion dollar question. I can assure you with almost 100 per cent certainty that the boom years are over. Forever. "Here goes the pessimist again," you may say. Well, I

believe I am on solid ground. I started out quoting *The March of Folly*. The greatest human folly ever, has been our march toward destruction of the environment.

OUR OVERLY optimistic money expectations are dwarfed by our over-consumption of the natural capital of the planet — the forests, the freshwater ecosystems and oceans. Paper values skidded some 40 per cent, but that is nothing compared to the decline that really counts: since 1970 the Living Planet Index — a measure of the health of the water, air, soil on which we depend for *life* — has dropped by about 35 per cent, according to a recent report from the Geneva-based World Wildlife Federation. We now are living 20 per cent above the Earth's biological capacity of 1.9 hectare (about five acres) per person. We, in North America, of course, outdo the rest of the world by a wide margin: we use the equivalent of 9.6 hectares or about 25 acres per person, compared to the average African or Asian, who has less than 1.4 hectares or 3.5 acres.

We are living far, far beyond our ecological means. It is this deficit, this abuse of life-capital, this shrinking of the very base on which our well-being depends, that will prevent us from ever again indulging in the extravagance of yesterday. Call it our last fling.

Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ont.

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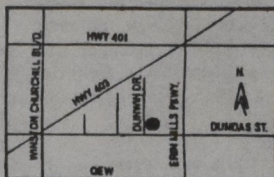
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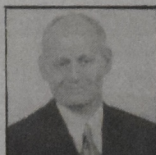
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Please let us know when placing your ad that you want to take advantage of this offer.</p> <p>SUBMITTING YOUR AD Mail: <i>Christian Courier</i> 1 Hiscott St. St. Catharines, ON L2R 1C7 fax: 905-682-8313 Email: accounts@christiancourier.ca</p> <p>OTHER INFORMATION a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format and editing style. b) Please provide us with clear copy. <i>Christian Courier</i> is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.</p>	<p>1947 August 21 2002 JOHN and FRANCES GUETTER (nee DeBoer) With praise and thanksgiving to God, we celebrate the 55th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents. Theresa & Larry, Gil & Anita, Frank & Carolyn, Margaret & Harry, Joanne, Michelle & Ed, Vince & Marcy. 22 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Open House at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church, on Saturday, August 24 from 2-4 p.m. Home Address: 716 West 5th St., Hamilton ON L9C 3R4</p> <p>1952 August 22 2002 Marknesse, N.O.P. Lindsay, Ont. 50th Anniversary GERBEN and INA TERPSTRA (nee Visser) Psalm 127:1-2 And He has kept His promises! We praise Him with our four children, nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. An Open House will be held from 2-4 p.m. Aug. 22 D.V. at the Lindsay CRC. Home Address: 159 Angeline St. N Lindsay, ON K9V 4X3</p> <p>1952 August 21 2002 "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness." Psalm 115:1 With joy and gratitude to God, we wish to congratulate our parents and grandparents. ALVIN and NORMA VENEMA on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. With love from each of us, David & Shelley Venema Keith and Kerri, Alan and Jodi, Mark Mary & Harry DeVries Timothy and Jennifer, Laura, Marie Robert Venema L.J., Lynzie, Bryen Carolyn & Robert Kippers Eric, Gregory, Ryan Mailing Address: 1812 Sawmill Rd. Caledonia, Ont. N3W 2G9</p> <p>1957 2002 JOHN and ANKY SUK (Rozendal) along with their children: Ethel Suk - St. Catharines, ON Ralph & Luanne Suk - Martin, MI Mark, Tiffany & Casey, Travis, Darrin Marlene & Martin Boardman - Waterdown, ON - Joshua, Matthew Al & Mariette Suk - Welland, ON Ellery, Lauranne Sandra & Henry Vanmarion - Niagara Falls, ON - Emily, Grace Donna & Bernie Pot - Toronto, ON Abigail will be celebrating their 45th wedding Anniversary on D.V. August 17, 2002. Open house at Covenant CRC, 278 Parnell Rd, St. Catharines, from 2-4 pm Dad and Mom, We are thankful to God for your loving example as parents and grandparents. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless you with much health and joy for many more years. With love, Your children Home address: 15 Sharon St. St. Catharines, ON L2N 3J3</p> <p>1952 2002 Wedding Verse "...the Lord will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore." Psalm 121:8 With praise and thanksgiving, we thank our Heavenly Father for blessing our parents, WARNER and GRIETJE KOITER (nee vanHuizen) with 50 years of marriage. Their children and grandchildren: Klaas & Wilma Koiter - Midland Laura, Ian, David Trixie & Pieter Wonder - Hagersville Sharon, Philip, Heather Renée Rob & MaryAnn Koiter - Brantford Daphne, Lisa, Tara, Rob, Nicholas Nick & Sandra Koiter - Guelph Mark, Brian, Alex, Renée, Debra Dave & Aline Koiter - Hamilton Jared and Lauren Invite you to celebrate this joyous occasion at an Open House on August 31, 2002, 2 - 4 p.m. at the Christian Reformed Church Hall, 150 Bruinsma Ave., Wallaceburg, Ontario. May God bless you on this special day and in the years to come.</p> <p>The Nyburg family would like to extend a warm invitation to anyone who wishes to celebrate the 40th anniversary of GERRIT and GRACE NYBURG Please join us for an open house in their honor at 673 Westover Rd, Dundas, Ontario on August 10 from 1-4 p.m. Best wishes only please.</p>	<p>June 16, 1928 July 16, 2002 Enter, The Neth. Ottawa, Ont.</p> <p>It pleased the Lord to take unto Himself our beloved husband, father and Opa, JERRY MORSINK (Aleidus Gerrit) after a long struggle with cancer. He will be lovingly remembered, and sadly missed by his wife Minny, his children, Eric & Linda - Cambridge, ON Richard & Caroline - Montreal, PQ Everett & Belinda Dykstra - Surrey, BC seven grandchildren; his sister, brother, and two sisters-in-law. Service was held on July 19, 2002, 10:00 am at The First Christian Reformed Church of Montreal. Private family burial was held at Rideau Memorial Gardens in Montreal. Correspondence address: R. Morsink 114 Du Docteur, Pierrefonds, PQ H8Z 1L2</p> <p>JACQUELINE M. ZINGER-VANLEEUEWEN Died July 9, 2002 in Ottawa at the age of 38 of a brain hemorrhage. She will be sadly missed by her husband, Ivan, their young daughter Genevieve, her parents, James and Irene of Toronto and her sisters, Annette and Jennifer, as well as brothers-in-law, extended families and friends. She enjoyed positions at her work, her church, and in her community. The Memorial Service was held on July 13, 2002 at Glebe-St. James United Church in Ottawa. Correspondence address: James and Irene VanLeeuwen 89 Inglewood Dr. Toronto, ON M4T 1H4</p> <p> Obituaries</p> <p>The heavenly Gardener called ANNE POLMAN (Van Dijk), 90, into eternal glory July 10th 2002. Born in Dordrecht, The Netherlands Nov. 29, 1911, the oldest in a loving family of 5 girls and 2 boys. Anne volunteered in youth work, especially in the church's young women's movement. From this experience she went on to social work assisting young women from the countryside who were settling in the city. During WWII, she was employed in a program supporting families whose husbands or sons had been sent off to Germany as forced labor. She and Gerrit Polman, pastor, married in 1943. The fondest and most formative period in their partnership began after the war, when they served as missionaries in Indonesia. Service among the Toradja people on the island of Celebes—now Sulawesi—ended prematurely in the political turmoil after Indonesia's independence. The family was taken captive, imprisoned and ultimately miraculously freed by the Indonesian Army in 1950. They returned to The Hague, and 5 years and 2 children later immigrated to Canada. Once the older children left home in the 1960s, Anne returned to the arts and handicrafts of her youth and added new interests: weaving, leather crafts, spinning, teaching workshops, involvement in women's ministries, the Canadian Bible Society, small groups and Amnesty International. We praise God for a full and rich life. Anne experienced the prior loss of her son William (1993), son John (missing since 1987), son-in-law Mike Visser (1988), grandson Elliot who died in infancy 1976, a sister, brother, and brother-in-law. Fondly remembering her are family in the Netherlands, her loving husband Gerrit, her dear 18 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and children Garrett (Etsuko), Bert (Betty), Ingrid Visser, and Gus (Wynanda). Friends and family joined in a memorial service July 16, at Fleetwood CR, Surrey (John 15:1-8). Donations in lieu of flowers gratefully received by Canadian Bible Society, 700 Kingsway, Vancouver, V5V 3C1.</p>
<p> Anniversaries</p> <p>1962 September 1 2002 Brockville, Ontario With thanksgiving and praise to God, we DICK and KATHY VAN VELDHUSEN (nee Modler) Along with our children and grandchildren: Debbie & Dave Ruisard Kiersten, Rachel, Marie - N.J. Richard & Yvonne Taylor, Kristen, Jordan - N.J. Paul & Tami Emily, Trevor - Maryland David - Toronto, Ontario Celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary on August 15th at the Blinkbonnie Harbor Inn in Gananoque, Ontario, where we had our wedding reception 40 years ago. Home address: 1 Nelson St., Whitehouse Str. N.J. 08889, U.S.A.</p>	<p></p>	

Classifieds

Job Opportunities

Zion Christian Reformed Church in Oshawa, Ontario, is seeking a **part-time worship co-ordinator**, 20-25 hours per week. The position starts in Sep/Oct. 2002. For full details, contact Aileen at 905-436-3255 or email: zioncra@planeteeer.com



Wedding Announcements

Scholten Murray
Jack and Theresa Scholten are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter

Patricia
to
Brandon

son of Steve and Sherri Murray. The wedding will take place D.V. Sept. 7, 2002 in the Drayton Christian Reformed Church at 2 p.m. Pastor G. Bomhof officiating.

Allan & Maria Smedes of Kingston, Ontario and Harry & Tine Houtman of Toronto, Ontario are delighted to inform you that their children

Anne Marie Smedes
and
Peter Neil Houtman

will be joined in marriage on August 24, 2002 at 11:00 a.m. in the Ancaster Christian Reformed Church. You are invited to join us for the ceremony. Anne Marie and Neil will be residing at: 30 Mohawk Rd. W. Apt. 225 Hamilton, ON L9C 1V8

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House to share in central St. Catharines with college/career. On bus route. Call Anita at 905-684-5806.

Miscellaneous

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Church News

The First Christian Reformed Church of Chilliwack, B.C. hopes to celebrate its **50th anniversary** on Oct. 19th and 20th, 2002 D.V. All former and present members and friends are invited to help us celebrate God's faithfulness. For more information or if you need billeting call: Mrs. Erna Maarhuis at 604-794-7140 or e-mail: pjronda@telus.net

Miscellaneous

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Recipe

Stoofpeertjes ("Little Stewing Pears")

These are the pears the Dutch like to eat warm or cold with fowl. The Dutch stewing variety gets dark pink because of its nature or the addition of red currant sauce, but any pear you stew will turn pink, too, because of the red wine.

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 1 cup sugar
- 12 pears, peeled, cored, and quartered
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- ½ teaspoon grated lemon rind

Bring water, wine, and sugar to a boil and cook, stirring constantly, until sugar is dissolved. Add pears and simmer until almost tender. Add cinnamon and lemon rind and continue simmering until pears are cooked through.

* From "Of Dutch Ways" by Helen Colijn



Miscellaneous

I have known and admired ICS for many years.

John Stott, author and founder of John Stott Ministries for Third World pastors



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Future residents of Shalom Evergreen Terrace prepare for occupancy this Fall. With 80% of suites sold this new Life Lease Christian community, designed exclusively for seniors 55 plus has filled a need for an alternative housing option. This is a community you can have faith in!

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To learn more about this Christian community, plan to attend Monday Open Houses from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon at Mountainview CRC, 290 Main St. East, Grimsby Call (905) 309-7888 for information.



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Events/Advertising

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

- Aug 15 Seniors Day at Lakewood Christian Campground. 9:00 a.m. Speaker: Pastor Fred VandeBerg. Bring your own lunch and lawn chairs. Refreshments provided. For info: Sylvia 519-899-4415
- Aug 24 Clinton & District Christian School 40th year reunion. For info on events, call 519-482-7851.
- Sep 18 Classis Niagara meeting 4p.m. at Providence CRC, Beamsville, Ont. See this issue for details.
- Sep 28 Celebrating 50 years in ministry. Rev. W. Buursma at Strathroy east CRC. Ph: 519-245-0454
- Sep 29 Rev. Henry R. De Bolster will celebrate, D.V., his 40th anniversary in the ministry with a special worship service of thanksgiving and praise. More info to follow.
- Oct 5,6 Bethel CRC of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan 50th anniversary. Contact Betty Veltkamp, 302-510 th Av N, Saskatoon, SK S7K 2R2 or email: bveltkamp@sasktel.net
- Oct 19 A Day of Encouragement and training for deacons, elders and other caregivers at Hamilton District Christian High School in Ancaster. Theme: "Go out in Joy!". Featuring 50 workshops including special sessions for elders and caregivers. Cost: \$45. Contact your deacons for a registration form, or Diaconal Ministries at 905-336-2920 or at www.diaconalministries.com.
- Oct 18,19,20 Immanuel Christian School, Oshawa, Ont. 40th Anniversary. For event info, contact Trudy Bouma at 905-623-1103 or email: r.bouma@sympatico.ca
- Oct 19,20 First CRC of Chilliwack B.C. 50th anniversary. For info & billeting: call Erna Maarhuis 604-794-7140 or e-mail: pjonda@telus.net
- Oct 26 CLAC 50th Anniversary Celebration. Dr. Calvin Seerveld keynote speaker, Hamilton District Christian High. For further information, call Pauline at 905-945-1500.
- Nov.1 Christian Festival Concert under the direction of Leendart Kooij in Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto \$28/\$21/\$16. Call 416-636-9779.

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is a vibrant congregation in Mississauga, a suburban area west of Toronto. In addition to our regular programs, we have also launched both Alpha and Network in the last year. So that we might better accommodate our various ministries, we have recently voted to relocate to new and expanded facilities. Currently we have 4 part-time staff positions open in the areas of:

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- Outreach Ministry,
- Volunteer/Ministry Coordinator
- Worship Coordinator.



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If you have a deep love for the Lord, have gifts and a passion for service in any of these areas, coupled with a demonstrated ability to work in a team environment, we would like to hear from you. An ability to preach occasionally would also be an asset.

Please direct inquiries and résumés to:

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E mail: mail@clarksoncra.on.ca



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News

New Anglican leader described as an intellectual, liberal and 'peacenik'

Cedric Pulford

LONDON, England (ENI) — A prominent Anglican intellectual and theologian, Rowan Williams, has been named as the next archbishop of Canterbury in succession to George Carey.

As archbishop, he will be the spiritual head of the Church of England and leader of the nearly 70 million-strong Anglican Communion worldwide.

Dr. Williams, 52, who is currently the bishop of Wales, said when the appointment was announced: "An enormous trust has been placed in my hands, and I can only approach it with a degree of awe as well as gratitude that I have been thought worthy of it."

He said that he hoped "with all my heart that I can serve to nurture confidence and conviction in our church."

Profoundly learned

The *Daily Telegraph* described Williams as "a holy man, profoundly learned, one who watches the signs of the times with the wisdom and compassion of the unworldly."

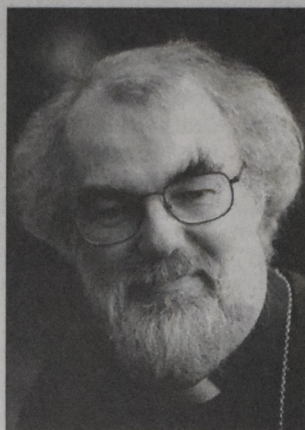
One of his strongest backers was the former South African Anglican archbishop, Desmond Tutu, who described Williams as the Church of England's leading theologian and someone with a deep spirituality.

Gay groups welcome appointment

Williams is from Anglicanism's liberal wing, and his appointment was welcomed by gay and women's groups within the Church of England. The appointment of women bishops and the admittance of practicing homosexuals to the ministry, both presently disallowed, are the two most divisive issues facing the church. Williams's liberal stance on homosexuality will likely rankle many in Africa and Asia. However, Anglican provinces are autonomous, and although the archbishop of Canterbury wields moral authority, he has no power to impose his views on the provinces.

Richard Kirker, general secretary of Britain's Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, said of the appointment: "This is extraordinarily good news and we are tremendously excited. No longer will we need to feel shut out of the heart of the church."

"For too long the Church of England has marginalized lesbian and gay people. It has been responsible for legitimizing prejudice,



WORLD COMMUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Incoming Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams.

discrimination and injustice. Dr Williams's reputation as a man of prayer and reflection gives us great hope that those days are now coming to an end."

Christina Reese, chair of WATCH (Women and the Church), said she was "excited" by the appointment of Williams. "He will consecrate the first women as bishops," she told ENI.

High-risk strategy

Reese claimed that sentiment in Church of England parishes had already moved decisively in favor of women bishops, which she expected to be approved by 2006 or 2007.

Geoffrey Kirk, national secretary of the Anglican traditionalist group Forward in Faith, told ENI: "It is a high-risk strategy to have chosen someone so closely associated with the issues of women bishops and homosexuality."

Kirk said the appointment of Williams was "on the surface a dangerous choice" because of the possible negative reaction in the southern hemisphere, and the appointing authorities "might have been more cautious."

In July, Williams gave an early indication that he may be more outspoken than his predecessor, Dr. George Carey. He was a signatory to a statement in the Roman Catholic journal, *The Tablet*, describing the prospect of a renewed attack on Iraq as "both immoral and illegal." The statement said: "It is deplorable that the world's most powerful nations continue to regard war and the threat of war as an acceptable instrument of foreign policy."

Born in Swansea into a Welsh-speaking family, Williams graduated from Cambridge University and spent two years at the

Community of the Resurrection, an Anglican monastery in Mirfield, in northern England.

He was Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford University from 1986 to 1992. He was enthroned as bishop of Monmouth in 1992 and archbishop of Wales in 2000.

He has written a number of books on the history of theology and spirituality and published collections of articles and sermons — as well as poems.

Williams emerged as the 104th archbishop of Canterbury from an elaborate selection process that started last January when Carey, 66, announced his retirement to take effect on October 31.

A Crown Appointments Commission was set up, including representatives of the diocese of Canterbury and clergy and lay members from the Church of England's ruling general synod.

Queen made final choice

Because the Church of England is an "established," or state, church, the final choice for the post was made by the government in the name of Queen Elizabeth II.

Meeting in secret, the commission considered a range of names and put two forward to Prime Minister Tony Blair. The second name has not been made public.

As one of the youngest appointees to Canterbury in recent times, Williams will be able to serve for almost two decades before he reaches the mandatory retirement age of 70.

Williams will have another distinction: he will be the first bearded archbishop of Canterbury for more than 300 years, according to church authorities. The last bearded primate was Archbishop Gilbert Sheldon, who held the office from 1663 to 1677.

Outspoken peace advocate

The *New York Times* describes him as follows:

A self-confessed youthful "peacenik" who was once arrested for reading psalms on the runway of a United States air base in Britain, the bearded cleric has more recently castigated the United States for withdrawing from environmental treaties, criticized the bombing of Afghanistan as "morally tainted" and said that any invasion of Iraq would be "immoral and illegal."

Earlier this year, he signed an open letter to the government denouncing any military strike on Iraq, arguing that "eradicating the

dangers posed by malevolent dictators and terrorists can only be achieved by tackling the root causes of the disputes."

In a book serialized in *The Times of London*, he attacks what he calls the corruption and premature sexualization of children, and singles out the Disney Corporation as one of the worst offenders.

"What can we say about a marketing culture that so openly feeds and colludes with obsession," he wrote, "The Disney empire has developed this to an unprecedented degree of professionalism."

Lessons in popular culture

At the same time, he finds lessons in popular culture, professing that one of his clerical heroes is Father Ted, the central figure in a British television series about a bumbling Irish priest. He has also cited "The Simpsons" favorably as "one of the most subtle pieces of propaganda around in the cause of sense, humility and virtue."

In a scathing article, the chaplain to the London Stock Exchange, Peter Mullen, declares in his headline: "A terror apologist may soon lead the Church of England." He takes issue with a booklet Williams wrote last year in response to the attack on the World Trade Center urging us not to respond to violence with violence. Williams, he point out, is even reluctant to describe the perpetrators as evil; instead, he goes on to repeat the old story of the oppressed who are left with no other options.

Mullen writes: "There is a blurring here of revenge and justice. I may seek on my own behalf to turn the other cheek, but I am not enjoined to do so on behalf of those who have suffered innocently. In fact, I'm obliged to take up the sword on behalf of the fatherless children and the widow. Not to do so is to concede victory to the aggressors, and that would be unjust."

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News Digest

The lone yodeler

BERLIN, Germany (Reuters) — German police investigating reports of screams coming from an apartment recently said they had found a 76-year-old woman practicing for a yodeling diploma.

Neighbors called police after hearing noises coming from the flat in the western town of Offenbach near Frankfurt.

"The officers weren't able to judge whether the neighbors were unfamiliar with Bavarian folk music or whether the lady still requires a lot of practice," police said in a statement.

Earlier, police in the city of Aachen said they had cautioned a man for screaming in a forest to relieve his stress. His yelling had frightened neighbors.

Across ocean by jet-ski

MIAMI, Florida (*Miami Herald*) — A Spanish aristocrat has become the first person to cross the Atlantic by jet ski. Alvaro De Marichalar landed on Miami Beach four months after setting off from Rome.

He spent about 12 hours a day on the water and slept on a support boat, never stepping ashore. Count Alvaro, brother-in-law of Princess Elena of Spain, told the *Miami Herald* the hardest part of the challenge was the cold weather and 18-foot waves.

Alvaro stood up on the jet ski for most of the journey to prevent possible injury to his spine. He was greeted in Miami by his mother, Countess de Ripalda, and celebrated by reciting the Lord's Prayer.

The 41-year-old left Rome on February 23. He lost about 10 kg in body weight during the journey. Alvaro observed: "I had a lot of chances of not arriving [in Miami]. It was quite scary. You realize you are nobody at all — just a little tiny thing in the house of God."

A polite robber

TOCHIGI, Japan (*Mainichi Daily News*) — A polite criminal in Japan asked a shop worker if he could rob him, then apologized for the inconvenience.

The grey-haired robber walked into the shop in Japan and pulled out a knife. He went over to the assistant and said: "Excuse me, I'm terribly sorry but my company has gone bankrupt." The *Mainichi Daily News* reports he politely asked for the contents of the till and apologized again as he left. Police in Tochigi say no one was injured. The man escaped on a bicycle with about \$247 (U.S.).